Lord John Manners
and His Friends

Charles Whibley

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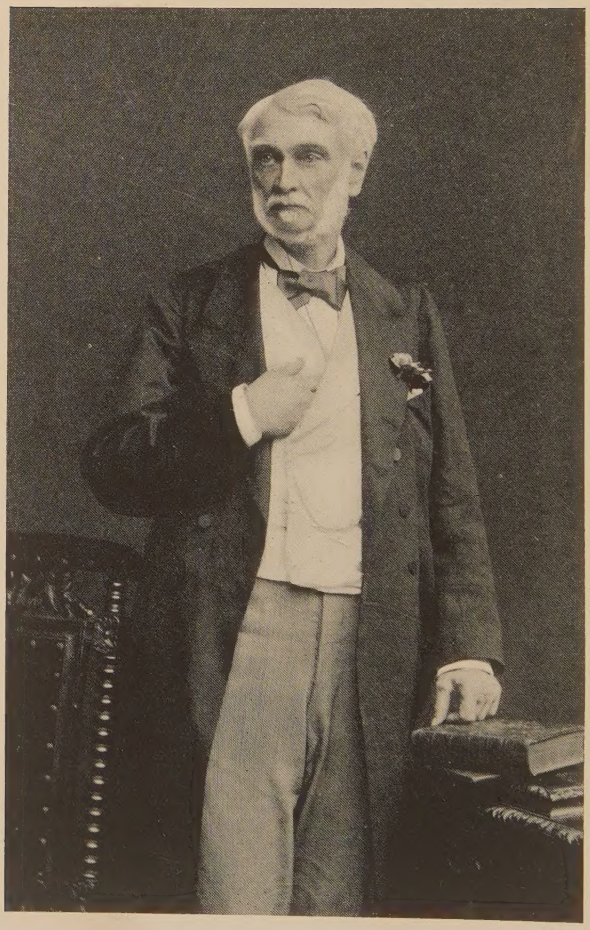

LORD JOHN MANNERS.
The seventh Duke of Rutland.

(From a photograph.)

LORD JOHN MANNERS

AND HIS FRIENDS

BY

CHARLES WHIBLEY

VOLUME II.

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LORD JOHN MANNERS
AND HIS FRIENDS.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE YEARS BETWEEN.

THE end of the wonderful year 1848, in which revolution had stalked across Europe like a pestilence, found England firmly established in her respect for the throne and constitution, and yet profoundly disturbed in politics. The repeal of the Corn Laws had not brought peace and plenty to the land; and though the worship of the Big Loaf [1] had made a return to the ancient tariff impossible, the champions of Protection would not confess themselves beaten. The result

[1] As a proof that politicians find neither new schemes nor new cries, it may be cited that Charles Greville, writing in 1852, says: "All those who have found themselves obliged to abandon Corn Laws, and to subscribe to the Big Loaf Doctrine, have nevertheless talked largely of Protection in the shape of compensation, and of justice to the landed interest by means of fiscal arrangements."

was the division in the ranks, the diversity of thought in the Tory Party, which acknowledged not one but several leaders, and embraced this or that policy, as opportunity seemed to dictate. For Lord John Manners, sanguine as always, the situation was by no means hopeless; and though he still looked upon the House of Commons from outside, he showed himself prudent as ever in his correspondence with Disraeli, Augustus Stafford, and his other friends. Indeed, if his vocation were ever in doubt, his letters written in these days of his exclusion from politics would prove him irrevocably sealed of the craft. In his years of leisure he printed a bundle of notes on Scottish harbours in explanation of Schetky's drawings, and published a volume of 'English Ballads,' but these were mere interludes in his political activity. The one abiding interest of his life was the proper government of his country. It matters not to whom he writes; the one subject dominates his letters. With Disraeli he is in constant communication, and there is the same admiring loyalty on the one hand, the same regret felt for an absent colleague on the other, as heretofore. Whenever a seat is vacant, Disraeli and Stafford do their best for their unlucky friend. Now Liskeard or Shoreham seems to offer a chance, now South Derbyshire, but the lack of money and the obduracy of the Whips are still strong obstacles in the way of Lord John's success. Truly, he was asked to pay in full for the suspicion of Popery which had unjustly besmirched his name.

In the years of transition between Peel's repeal of the Corn Laws and the Tory Party's final abandonment of Protection, Lord John remained constant to the ancient faith. He still believed in the sound policy of supporting the country against the town, and in defending agriculture as the staple industry of England. On 28th January 1849 he hails Disraeli confidently as "the leader of the Country Party"; and though Stafford seemed afraid of the clergy, Lord John thought it enough to tell him of Disraeli's alliance with S. Oxon, which amused and, I think, staggered him. He sketches the feeling of the country with the fulness of knowledge gained on the spot at Belvoir. "The farmers are beginning to cry out lustily," he writes, "and are everywhere either reducing wages or employment. Incendiary fires are the result; we had two within five miles of Belvoir Castle, and things are assuming an alarming aspect. The price of flour has not fallen in any proportion to the fall in the price of wheat." He compares Disraeli's position in Parliament with that of the Duke's in Spain—"with a few good hardy English troops to rely upon, an energetic and powerful enemy to oppose, and a confused mass of friendly partisans, who, from pride, jealousy, superstition, or stupidity, were eternally thwarting his combinations or deserting him in the hour of need." Yet in the same letter, written on 2nd February 1849, he declares himself full of hope for the future. "As to our prospects," says he, "they are brighter than ever. We are now on the

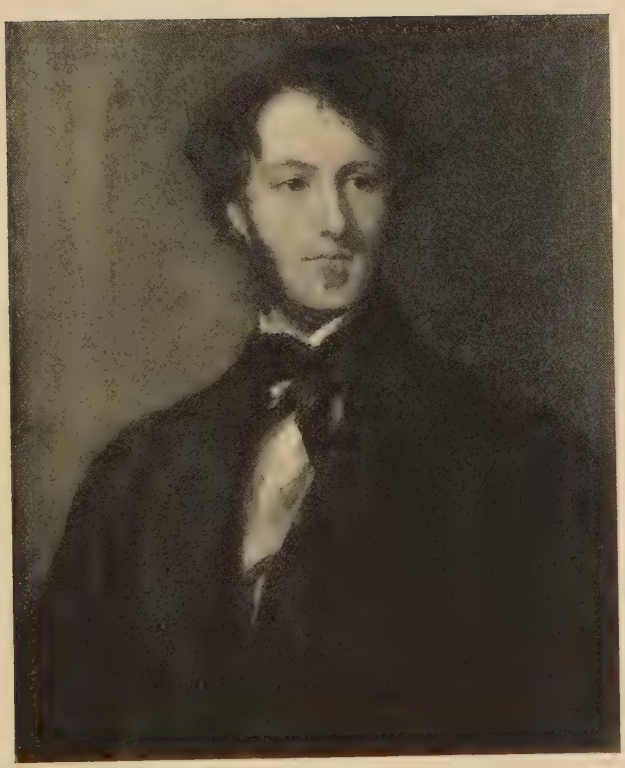
aggressive, instead of on the defensive : a party with recognised leaders, a powerful Press, and a great stake in the country, stands out broadly before men's eyes in opposition to another great party—the *tertium quid* must soon be absorbed into one or other, or both of these."

Disraeli's position, strong as it appeared to Lord John's prophetic eye, was not easy. A leader, without full responsibility, he could not do as he would, and the credit which he should have won from his damaging speeches was grudgingly given. There were detractors not a few in his own party. "It is the fashion to say—something must be said—that Diz is ignorant," wrote Stafford on 5th March 1849, "but we thereat can afford to smile." And Stafford's confidence in Disraeli was by no means unreserved. He was of those who would not, if they could help it, entrust him with the sole undivided leadership of the party. He was all for the Tories winning the trust of the country before they devised schemes. He urged that Lord John should give Disraeli a hint not to endanger his position by the exhibition of phantasmagoria. "Depend upon it," said he oracularly on 7th November 1849, "our business is to wait—not much longer perhaps—but it is idle to exhibit fireworks before sunset." So Disraeli, feeling himself admired, yet alone, turned to John Manners, his "best and earliest political friend," who, though he was out of Parliament, was still admitted freely into the secrets of the party. When

Disraeli conferred with Granby, one of the three leaders, a reservation as to confidence was always made on both sides, or, as Disraeli expressed it in a letter to Granby of 1st April 1850, "as far as we three are concerned, I never wish there should be any secrets, but that the confidence should be complete," as indeed it was.

Meanwhile, Disraeli deplored more deeply than ever the absence of his friend from the House. He saw that here was an opportunity to develop men, and he was forced to put up with "all the old rubbish." How could he conduct the fight when his army was without officers? "All my hopes and my heart," he wrote on 18th March 1849, "are turned in this dilemma to yourself; with you at my right hand much might be done: and I cannot believe that any lengthened period can elapse without your returning to a post for which you are in so many respects so greatly qualified." When John Manners was disheartened, Disraeli was always there with encouragement. "You must not give up public life," he wrote on 15th October 1849. "You were never more wanted. All will, all must, end right in that respect, and you will appear like a fresh knight at the critical moment. I have something on the cards for you." Stafford translated the same sentiment in terms of an easier familiarity. "Ah! John, unpardonable," he writes on 20th March 1849; "why did you let those Popish knick-knacks cut you out? . . . See but for them how grandly you would have come in for Liverpool!"

The party, as we have seen, was a Cerberus party, and its three heads did not look all in the same direction. Even if this impossible end could ever be achieved, Lord Granby, Herries, and Disraeli were not the three to achieve it. They moved always at different speeds; they were driven by different impulses. Herries was a straying from the past, and could not adapt himself to the new conditions. Granby was by temperament a Die-hard. He believed that the country could be saved only by Protection, and he would rather retire from politics altogether than surrender his convictions. On the other hand, Disraeli knew well that the government of the country could not be carried on merely by a faithful adherence to a lost cause. Moreover, he knew that he possessed in a higher measure than the other two the quality of leadership; and though he was perfect in loyalty to his colleagues, he was convinced that nothing satisfactory would ever be done until the whole burden of responsibility was laid upon him. The problem was difficult of solution, and it is a high tribute to the fast friendship which bound the two brothers—Lord Granby and Lord John Manners—that they took each of them his own way without ever disturbing an amiable relationship. Charles Greville tells us that in 1852, Granby, disgusted at the conduct of Lord Derby's Government, threatened to make his opinions public. His father pointed out that if he carried out his threat he would seriously injure the Government of which his brother was a



THE MARQUIS OF GRANBY.

The sixth Duke of Rutland.

(From a painting by Sir Francis Grant at Belvoir Castle.)

member. To which he replied that "he would not abstain from attacking his own brother if he chose to desert the principles he had always maintained." Indeed, he would not, and had he attacked his brother, the attack would have been borne without resentment. Lord John, on the other hand, was always opposed to the divided leadership, and since there were no secrets between the brothers, Lord Granby knew well what was Lord John's opinion. That opinion was, indeed, familiar to all. "I wished and worked," wrote Lord John to Disraeli on 2nd February 1849, "that the leadership might have been a Monarchy, but as a Triumvirate has been established, I must salute the new power, and wish it well; possibly your power will be greater for being nominally less." Thus there was a division between the brothers and no animosity.

The Triumvirate, then, was foredoomed to failure. The three agreed neither in tactics nor in policy. They met too seldom, and each conducted the campaign as he thought best. As Stafford reports in February 1849, "they botched it every night." When Granby spoke without the knowledge of his colleague, Disraeli said "Good Heavens! the leader of a party to speak on a 'Report'! Chaos, my dear Stafford, Chaos, Chaos!" And worse than the inevitable confusion was Disraeli's justified suspicion that he was not being fairly treated. "Straight from Dis. I went to Stanley," wrote Stafford in the letter already cited, "and to Stanley I spoke un-

reservedly, telling him Dis. conceived the aristocracy were merely using him as a tool, that some of the party distrusted and some abhorred him, that he would have to fight Cobden and Johnny in front—Peel at his side, but not otherwise than hostilely,—and that if, in addition, he had foes on the benches behind, the thing would be unworkable." Truly it would be, and was. Meanwhile the letters exchanged by Lord Granby and Lord John show how impossible the situation was, that the party could not keep all its three heads. Lord John fully acknowledges the unselfishness of his brother's motives and actions, but insists, and in vain, upon harmony. He cannot understand why their friends are incensed against Disraeli, and begs his brother to pacify the angry ones. "Convince Dis. of the truth," says he on 7th February 1849, "that some of the aristocracy are quite true and loyal to him, and that leaning on them he may disregard the small cavillers—and all will yet be well." Granby's answer is an answer of despair. He wants nothing more than a quiet corner of the earth, where he might escape from the tortures of the political world; and yet he held on to his false position for some three years a leader in name only, and always desiring to be gone.

The truth is that Disraeli and Granby were hopelessly divided on the matter of principles. Even if the Cerberus party had been well managed, which it was not, the Triumvirate could not have been held together in the bonds of peace. Granby, as I have

said, remained unto the end a convinced champion of Protection; and in October 1850, Disraeli, being a practical statesman, had arrived at the conclusion that the case was judged and could not be reopened. "If general prosperity and agricultural distress," he wrote to John Manners, "be concurrent when Parliament meets, which is not improbable, and we are equal to the occasion, we might do something. The great point is to devise a scheme which will rally the landed party, and yet be suited to the spirit of the age. As for Protection in its old form, I look upon that as dead." It was not a counsel of perfection; it was practical politics. Granby was prepared to fight unto the last ditch, while Disraeli desired an opportunity of proving his skill in government. He was convinced that the landed interest was the only one which required anything to be done for it, and that it would never do to revive the old form of Protection merely for the land. Holding such views as these, Disraeli could not work with Granby in close companionship. The wonder is that they pretended to share the leadership so long as they did; and when the open separation came, Disraeli already controlled the House of Commons in all save in public report.

The final blow was struck by Granby, who, in a clear and honest letter,[1] addressed in January 1851 to Lord Derby, brought the threefold leadership to an end. The letter, a copy of which was sent

[1] See Appendix.

to Disraeli by John Manners, contained a formal statement of facts which had long been within the common knowledge of the party. Granby found his position not merely nominal, which he would not have minded, but false also, since he was held responsible for counsels and tactics of which he was ignorant. His proposal that the Committee should meet once a week to talk matters over had not been accepted, and the result had been that, when he had expounded as well as he could the views of the party, Disraeli had spoken in the opposite sense. This seemed bad enough to Granby, but it was not the worst. The two men were divided hopelessly, as I have said, in the matter of Protection. Though Granby did not underrate the relief which Disraeli proposed to afford by reducing or shifting burdens, he held that such an expedient was wholly inadequate as a national policy. "Two systems are before the world—England has to choose between them," thus he wrote in his letter to Derby. "Whatever may be her actual position, her wants, her engagements, her necessities, they cannot both be right, or equally favourable to her industrious development. To say that you will protect one class and not the other, or to inflict the evil or the good of Free Trade on the one and not on the other, seems to me equally unfair and impolitic. Either industry must be protected to enable it to bear the weight of Taxation now imposed upon it, or the Taxation must be diminished; but with diminished taxes must come diminished institu-

tions, diminished establishments, diminished greatness, honour, power, and credit, and I fear the cry for Cheap Bread will speedily be followed by the cry for Cheap Government and a Republic."

Thus Granby, at last in complete opposition to Disraeli, who had dismissed Protection from his mind, and who saw that the only means of reconstructing the party which Peel had shattered, was to offer what relief was possible to the agricultural interest, and to present to the country another ambition and a fresh ideal. John Manners, in transmitting a copy of Granby's letter to Disraeli, was in a difficulty. In all essentials he agreed with his brother. If he had wavered in 1846, he was now all for Thorough. His cry was "Away with the Income Tax, and hurrah for the Custom House." But he was moved to take a middle course as much by the loyal faith which he had in Disraeli's sagacity and patriotism as by the growing conviction that so long as Protection was a stumbling-block in the path of politics, there could be no Tory Party at all. Meanwhile he was all in favour of peace, and he did his best to make terms between the combatants. He hoped and thought that the difference which separated them related more to words than to things, or rather to one word, Protection. Granby would retain the words and phrases with which the country was familiar; Disraeli would drop them as unpopular. He sympathised with them both. "With Granby I agree"—thus he wrote—"that we cease to be a party if we drop the prin-

ciple of Protection. With you I am convinced of the impolicy of dragging it into every debate in the House of Commons." He believed that all would be well if Granby could be persuaded that Disraeli had not adopted the principle of fighting hostile tariffs with free imports. But for good or evil the principle which Disraeli had once condemned with all his eloquence and all his scorn he had now adopted, and Granby was right in regarding the party as disbanded, since Protection was abandoned.

And there was another reason why the stern unbending Tories, such as Granby, looked with a certain suspicion upon Disraeli at this moment. His 'Life of Lord George Bentinck' had recently been published, and while it revived the glorious memory of a famous fight, it revived also the deplorable incident of the Jewish debate. In the same letter wherein he attempts the ungrateful task of keeping the peace, John Manners praises Disraeli's book in the highest terms, and holds the insertion of the remarkable twenty-fourth chapter unjustifiable. To-day we regard that chapter and much else in Disraeli's career with a detached fairness of mind. It is easy to see why Granby, Stafford, and other champions of Church and State feared the leadership of one who saw in Calvary the completion of Judaism. However, John Manners had nothing to regret. He had held the scales of loyalty, as between brother and friend, with an equal justice, and there was an end of the matter. "I have done my best to keep you and Granby together"

—thus he concludes his letter of 5th January 1851— "and cannot reproach myself if you separate: but I hope and trust that when the Ministry breaks up, as it must do before Easter, that we may be found a strong and united party, with a clear though moderate policy, headed by Lord Derby in the Lords, and you in the Commons."

When Granby first threatened retirement from the tripartite leadership, Disraeli took a gloomy view of the situation, and declared that Granby's decision would be his also. But he presently repented him of his haste, and closed the whole incident in a wise outspoken letter to John Manners, dated 26th January 1852, which made an end of the controversy. "My dear John," he writes, "Granby has given you an account of what took place at Burghley. The affair is skinned over, and we must all hope the best. I cannot but feel that there is some degree of estrangement between Granby and myself, and I deplore it. I take the blame entirely to myself. He has misapprehended some expressions and misconceived some actions. But explanations are seldom felicitous, and on the eve of the momentous and critical events with which I have now to deal, and for the results of which, right or wrong, I must be greatly responsible, I must dismiss the subject, though with regret, from my mind." For many months the threefold leadership, a necessary failure, had been but a pretence; now it ceased to be even a pretence. Disraeli was the sole leader in name, as he had long been in fact, of a

House of Commons which had ruthlessly shelved Protection, and Granby had renounced politics for ever.

In the meantime the fight for the leadership had not interrupted Lord John's resolution to find a seat in the House of Commons. He suffered disappointments not a few, and he owed little to the Whips, save a dubious invitation to oppose Lionel de Rothschild in the City of London. In June 1847 the Affirmation Bill, which had passed the Commons, was thrown out by the House of Lords. With an ill-omened delicacy the true purpose of the Bill, which was to permit Lionel de Rothschild to take the seat which he had won more than once, was obscured in either House. Much was said in the course of the debates of Quakers and Moravians. Hardly a word was spoken of what was in everybody's mind—the disabilities of the Jews. As I have said already, the Anti-Semitism of seventy years ago was based not upon race, as it is based to-day, but upon religion. Lionel de Rothschild was excluded from the House of Commons not because he was of Oriental descent, but because he refused to take the oath, to which all members were asked to subscribe; and on the Lords' rejection of his Relief Bill the elected member for the City determined to test the question once again.

John Manners had no thought of opposing him. Though he disapproved of Disraeli's incursion into theology, he harboured no prejudice against the Jews, and lived on terms of friendship with the

Rothschilds. One day, towards the end of June 1849, he dined with Mrs de Rothschild, and Meyer, by way of a jest, said to him, "Well, I suppose you'll stand against Lionel." He turned the matter off with a laugh, and thought no more about it. Two days later Beresford, the Whip, came to propose the candidature to him, and, after some hesitation, he accepted the proposal. He entered upon the contest without enthusiasm, and in spite of the strong disapproval of his father, who feared that his position at Liverpool would be endangered by his "having any connection with such an insignificant constituency (I mean as to character) as that of London." To Disraeli he wrote a curious letter (dated 1st July 1849), expressing his reluctance to stand, and defending his action on the ground that after the Drury Lane demonstration it appeared absolutely requisite that a battle should be fought. "On the question itself," said he, "which has brought about this untoward contest I shall endeavour to say as little as possible, for I have no strong feeling one way or the other—and wish to fight for the party, and at the same time to avoid hurting Rothschild's feelings."

The real point at issue was the competence of the House of Lords to do what it deemed its duty. Rothschild was sent back to the City as a protest against the Peers, who were said to have acted "in deliberate opposition to the House of Commons and the great mass of the People." The same hypocrisy was at

work then which has triumphed to-day. The Peers were assigned certain duties, and then denounced as the enemies of the human race because they performed them. Unhappily they have lost to-day that faith in their own strength and wisdom which supported them in 1849. Lord John, in opposing Rothschild, was upholding his own order, as he had every right to do. And by a strange perversity of judgment, 'The Times' held him disqualified for the contest by the mere fact of his rank. "If this"—as he tells us in his address—"is to be a contest between Patrician and Plebeian, Lord and Commoner, Lord John Manners should never have stood out as the champion of the Peers—for he is one of themselves." But if a man may not defend his own order, who shall defend it?

The contest was fought with more noise than animosity. It was with difficulty that John Manners got a hearing at all. "The row was prodigious," he says; "the mob made Rothschild inaudible by applauding, not by groaning." Augustus Stafford sent an account to the Duke of Rutland of the nomination, which was designed to reassure him and to show that the contest was not in vain, as indeed it was not.[1] The contest was carried on with much acrimony

[1] Thus writes Stafford: "I have just come from John's nomination at Guildhall, and I have promised to give your Grace some account of it, as he may not have leisure to write. I was among the crowd who would hear no one save their own sweet voices. I fancy that their orders were to that effect, for, as Rothschild cannot speak, the speech that will

by the supporters of Rothschild. Mr Raikes Currie extracted every ounce of prejudice he could from Young England and the famous couplet. He described Lord John as a member of the white waistcoat party —a benevolent association of young gentlemen to effect the restoration of mediæval institutions. He quoted the couplet with unction, and commented upon it with a heavy-footed pleasantry. "I am not an advocate in general," said he, "for electioneering placards or banners, but here is a sentiment which well deserves them; let it be printed, I beseech you, in Gothic characters, on a true blue ground, and

appear for him in 'The Times' to-morrow morning will be a less transparent lie than if he had been audible. John was obliged to give way for a moment because of the noise. A man next to me said: 'Ah, I thought we should soon settle the Lord.' This was received with some applause, but if they knew 'the Lord' as well as I know him they would not believe him thus easily put down. 'He won't try to speak no more.' 'He will, my word for it.' 'What will you bet, sir?' 'Nothing, for there he is.' And there he was off again as truly as ever. 'Well,' they said, 'he's a devilish plucky fellow. Is he really the Poet Laureate?' 'No, Wordsworth is.' 'Well, he's pasted up so outside.' 'Very likely; there's a deal of pasting goes on in this world, and the walls of Truth are well-nigh hidden by it. Three cheers for Lord John.' The city people say he has done very well, and are delighted with him. We had a friendly and vociferous, if not very select, party around us in our walk to the London Tavern, where I have left him at this moment. Your Grace is aware that we are not to be in despair, though he is in a minority, for I fancy his party has some ultimate appeal to which allusion now is not discreet." The voice of the people is unchanging, and Lord John's protest was evidently not without avail.

hung over his committee room. It will do a great deal for him. I am not sure that it will not do for him altogether." When John Manners stood up to speak on the hustings he was received with yells, groans, and other discordant sounds. He could say no more than: "It appears, gentlemen, you do not include liberty of speech in liberty of conscience." And when the poll was declared he had a majority of three thousand against him.

As I have said, the election was not contested in vain. Lord John had come forth as the vindicator of the law and as the maintainer of the indefeasible privileges of the Upper House. The controversy which raged about the admission of Jews to Parliament was settled some eight years afterwards, quietly and without scandal. In the meantime the contest put an end to a tiresome agitation. For himself, he was satisfied with the result, and his friends, who had been doubtful at first of his wisdom, were loud in congratulation. "You can't win, dearest J. M.," wrote George Smythe on 2nd July 1849, "nor is it good for your destiny that you should, but you never had a more loyal admirer or truer friend than G. S. S." So he was delighted with John Manners for hitting Raikes Currie's "hoary head but verdant flippancies," and thought that his "one hit of liberty of conscience not involving the liberty of speech, in all that tumult, deserves a civic crown, which is better than a civic return of these days." And then he recaught something of the ancient rapture. "But you

were in all things," he wrote, "as you always are, except your condescension in identifying yourself with the base and niddering magnates of this age, incomparable, admirable—a Church-Crichton." He still regretted that Lord John had not explained and defended the notorious couplet, and especially was he enraged that 'The Morning Chronicle,' his own paper, for which, however, he had not written for more than three months, should have joined in the hue and cry against his friend. "There is a sinister influence at work," he complained, "to attack those men whom I love and admire the most in the world. Pity me—to have to make such an excuse." And then he confesses with a touch of the cynical melodrama, which helped to make him the engaging figure he was, that he had been "in conditions when he ought perhaps to have committed suicide rather than have lived on this elephantiasis and mud-eating of literature." For all his discontent with life and himself, he was the same faithful friend that he had been ten years before; he still watched the prosperity of his friends without a trace of envy. Disraeli's comment on the City of London election was as truly characteristic as George Smythe's. To John Manners himself he said not a word of praise or blame. "I thought John Manners was whitewashed," he wrote to Lord Stanley on 28th December 1849, "by leading the forlorn hope against Rothschild, and that hereafter he was to be considered not only a Christian, but a Protestant."

Within a few months he reaped the harvest which he had sown in the City of London. Beresford and the party-mongers could no longer pass him over. And when in January 1850 there came a vacancy at Colchester he was chosen with proper justice to fill it. The opportunity found Disraeli loyal and helpful in friendship. A letter, addressed to Sir John Tyrell on 13th January 1850, put the case for John Manners with unassailable force, and since it sketches his character as Disraeli then saw it, I quote it at length: "My dear Tyrell," thus it runs, "move heaven and earth to bring in John Manners for Colchester. It would be of the greatest service to the party, and the greatest help to myself. He is ready in debate, can reply, is a thorough working-man, master of all the questions of the day, being a good reader of Blue-books, without which one can do nothing, is popular in the House, and full of pluck. As for religious points, he is a devoted son of the Church, and nothing more nor less. A few persons, who don't know him, may have some prejudices about some boyish Puseyism, all long forgotten, and at any time a respectable weakness. Leading, as he did last year, the forlorn hope against Rothschild in the City, and having stood for Liverpool, pledged against Roman endowment, ought to clear him of all these imputations, and gain him the undivided support of our Church and Protestant friends. But at the present moment the only question is Protection. No one understands the question more thoroughly than he, and has more

gallantly upheld it. He has visited and studied the manufacturing districts, and knows the whole thing completely. He can meet a leaguer on his own ground. . . . I write in great haste, not to lose a post. Pray give heart and soul to this affair of Manners. As Granby's brother, independently of his own claims, he should do. Besides, he is a perfect gentleman, amiable, trustworthy, and thoroughbred. *But it is for his* ability, acquirements, and working powers that I most want him. Ever yours, D. There would be no difficulty about the money. I shall be at Belvoir on the 18th." Few subalterns have ever earned or deserved a higher tribute from their colonel.

Thus wrote Disraeli to Sir John Tyrell, and to John Manners he wrote in the same sense, and, of course, with a deeper intimacy. He told him that he thought the important points were religion and money, and money the more difficult. He was sure that the election in the City against Rothschild had whitewashed John Manners, and that since there might chance to be no contest, the expenses might be small. And he ends a wise letter with a warning against the prevailing hope of a dissolution. "To call for a dissolution of Parliament," he said, "with commerce and manufactures thriving, the revenue increasing, money abundant, and pauperism reduced even in the rural districts, which is certainly the case, is the *delirium tremens* of politics." John Manners acquiesced, but saw more clearly than Disraeli that the decay of agriculture, then, as now, what we should

call a "key-industry," redressed the balance of prosperity.

The election at Colchester was a triumph, speedily won. Beresford "worked like a horse." The Clergy was silent and satisfied; and no word was said of the Jews. John Manners fought the election on Protection *versus* Free Trade, and polled 623 votes to his opponent's 386. Thus he was returned on 8th February 1850 to the House of Commons, after an absence which would have worn out the patience of one less sanguine than he, and he was frankly pleased at the result. "Behold me once more an M.P.," he wrote to Baillie-Cochrane on 16th February 1850, "representing the great oyster-beds of our native land." He was glad to be in the House again; he rejoiced in the satisfaction which his success, belated though it was, gave to his friends; and above all he was delighted to receive a letter of congratulation from the operatives of Manchester, because it proved to him that the cause of Protection was not yet lost in the very stronghold of Free Trade. Yet in the midst of his pride he was sensible of a certain humility. "I won't disguise from myself," said he to Lord Lyttleton on Ash Wednesday, 1850, "that political friends have formed and expressed expectations which I can never realise, and in all probability I shall fall a victim to my own reputation." Happily he survived even the competition with himself, and perhaps his diffidence may be ascribed to the solemn season of the year.

None of his friends welcomed him back to politics with a more sincere enthusiasm than the leader whom he had served faithfully inside the House and out. "It gives me great pleasure in this gloomy life," wrote Disraeli as early as 22nd January 1850, when the issue was no longer in doubt, "that I have had the satisfaction after many attempts of restoring you to your parliamentary place. But there is nothing like sticking to a thing. . . . May this step, my dearest John, lead to your prosperity and happiness, and may you serve both by serving that great country which we both love." Thus restored "to his parliamentary place," John Manners did but change one sphere of activity for another. As I have said, he was always in the counsels of the party, even while he was in retirement; and he was something other than a councillor. He was, so to say, the ear of Disraeli in the outer world. Those who wished to approach or advance the leader did it, as often as not, through John Manners. When in January 1849 R. A. Christopher, protesting that he "would rather burn off his right arm than submit to the disgrace of serving under Graham," demanded Disraeli as sole leader of the party, it was to Lord John that he went for help and advice. "No man regrets more than I do that you are not in the H. of C.," he wrote; "notwithstanding you may do much." Indeed he might! Indefatigable in speaking, he defended Protection on many platforms, and carried his arguments into the hostile camp of the Radicals, not

without disgust. When he "spouted at a great town's meeting" at Leicester, thus he writes in his diary, "the adulation paid me was so great that I believe if a Lord was to baa like a lamb, civic Radicals would applaud."

Meanwhile he represented the cause of Protection to all those who were working hard for it in the country. Thus he came into close relations with that resolute Tory and tireless champion of the working-classes, Richard Oastler, who had fought with Lord Ashley for many a year to rescue the children of Lancashire from the mills, for which he had earned the title of "King" through the north of England, and who later had given a loyal support to the doctrines of Young England. Oastler's career has not its parallel in English politics. Born in 1789, he was educated at Fulneck, and by 1820, when he was made steward to Thomas Thornhill's estates in Norfolk, he had made and lost a fortune. Always deeply immersed in politics, he was the champion at once of the working-classes and of the King. His opinions were his own, and stoutly held. He had advocated the abolition of slavery in the West Indies, and had opposed Catholic emancipation. Whatever question was asked, he answered after his own independent fashion, and made enemies in consequence. His stewardship of Thornhill's estates, which he held for eighteen years, was ultimately his undoing. Living at Fixby, the seat of his employer, he extended hospitality, at his own charges, to all who came thither,

because he could not consent, as he said, "that Fixby Hall should become proverbial for meanness to strangers and callers." So that when Thornhill discharged him for resisting the Commissioners of the Poor Law in the township of Fixby, he owed his employer some £2000, and that employer, in forgetfulness of past service, brought an action against him, leaving his honour untarnished, and, as he could not pay, saw that he was committed to the Fleet Prison. Here he solaced his leisure, and added vastly to his fame, by writing and publishing 'The Fleet Papers,' which have something of Cobbett's vigour and unexpectedness.

Above all, he was a resolute Tory, and he defined his creed with a happy intelligence. Toryism, he told the Duke of Wellington, meant "everything in its place and a place for everything." With equal ardour he detested Liberal philosophy and the Whig manufacturers. He was never tired of warning the Tories that if they supported Whig measures as Sir James Graham supported them, they would come to speedy ruin. The spirit of innovation he tracked vigilantly, the spirit which, he said, "boasted so liberally and acted so tyranically—the spirit which insulted and degraded royalty and nobility, whilst it crushed and oppressed the working-classes." He followed it through all its ramifications, until its "blood-steps showed him the path to the factories, the New Poor Law Bastilles, and to the dungeons of its deluded victims." He divined in 1841 that, "if

the New Poor Law be continued, it is out of the power of man to prevent the entire repeal of the Corn Laws." Thus he perceived that what he considered the two worst evils of the age were indissolubly interlocked.

His three years' imprisonment for debt had not lessened Oastler's courage nor impaired his energy, and he was as ready as ever to fight for "the altar, the throne, and the cottage." Meanwhile he was opposing Free Trade as bitterly as he had opposed the long hours and the harsh conditions of the factories. He was one of the few men who could meet the league speakers on the platform and beat them. He possessed all the qualities of the popular orator—a large voice, an ample gesture, an easy command of vigorous language; and Lord John, seeing his sincerity and his work, did his best to aid him. And not only did he help him himself, he did his best to persuade the leaders of the party to help him. "Oastler is the one engine," he writes to Granby on 18th December 1840, "by which the Manufacturing Districts can be worked, and I could wish Stanley sent him £10 with a few words of encouragement. Manchester and Leeds are not to be won by rosewater." Thus he came to exchange letters with Oastler, who expressed his gratitude and set forth his plans with equal energy. "I am meditating," he told Lord John in 1840, "a very weighty, but, if successful, I think, a very useful scheme—no less than an attempt to unite the working-classes of London against Free Trade, &c. I do

not know the Londoners as well as the men of Yorkshire and Lancashire ; but whenever I have addressed them, they have listened attentively and received me kindly." The scheme was, indeed, useful, but since the pure doctrine of the Big Loaf had been assiduously preached success was hopeless.

Yet Oastler still cherished a good hope of victory, in spite of Tory indifference and the tireless energy of Manchester, which, he was sure, aimed at a Republic. For himself, he was a high Tory, with a passion for what he called " our glorious constitution," and a sound conviction that " those new-fangled teachers who styled themselves ' liberal and enlightened ' were, in truth, the people's enemies." He complained rightly enough that he had been thwarted by those whose position and interest he was most anxiously supporting—the Clergy and the Aristocracy. " Had this been otherwise," he wrote in a lucid explanation of his views, " I should, of course, have done better service. I have, however, without abandoning any one of my principles, succeeded in obtaining the confidence of the working-classes among my fellow-countrymen, who recognise in me their friend—and the friend of the old constitution of England. They know that I have ever supported the rights of the Church, the Crown, and the aristocracy. I think also that I am now better understood by them." Thus John Manners, in close alliance with all who espoused the same cause, fought the battle of native industry in the country ; and when he returned to

the House of Commons he was welcomed as one who, though absent from the Senate, had not been idle, and at once took the high position to which his indefatigable zeal and high principles entitled him.

Meanwhile he had not lost sight of his old friends. George Smythe and Baillie-Cochrane were still bound to him in the close intimacy of Cambridge days, and in Augustus Stafford he kept an ever sympathetic and understanding comrade. Long holidays spent in country houses were for him the interludes of a busy life, and there is one incident which deserves to be recorded here. In the summer of 1850 he went on a picnic from Harden Grange to Haworth, and thus describes a memorable visit in a letter to Granby: "We pilgrimaged yesterday to Jane Eyre's village. It is a manufacturing village on the side of a steep bleak moorland. Her father is the rector. The streets are narrow and paved; the parsonage unapproachable in a carriage. She is very shy and retiring, but after a short delay came into the room: pale, thin, pretty manners, very intelligent countenance. A drawing of her by Richmond hung on the wall, rather like her, but far more like 'Becky Sharp' in 'Vanity Fair.' She had been a month this year in London, but was glad to get back to her Yorkshire solitude. Her father is a tipsy old Tory parson; name Brontë." A slight sketch, but done in the colours of truth.[1]

[1] We are fortunate in having in Mrs Gaskell's 'Life' Charlotte Brontë's own account of the visit: "I forgot to tell you,"

George Smythe, indeed, above all others remained his friend through the changes and chances of life. The political ties which once had bound them had been rudely snapped. Though George Smythe remained a member of the House of Commons until 1852, he had separated himself from his old party, and took but a cynical interest in affairs. He had become an onlooker, to whom the deeds and words of politicians were indifferent or distasteful. But, on the one hand, he retained all his own humorous delight in life; on the other, his loyal attachment to Disraeli and John Manners never wavered. Though, as I have said, the letters written to George Smythe have disappeared, his letters addressed to his "Dearest J. M." still remain, and reflect the shifting tempers of them both. In September 1850, Lord John is dejected. George Smythe, by a natural reaction, is in high spirits. "Fragrant indeed of the Past," he writes, "is this St Martin's Summer; so let us in-

she wrote to Miss Nussey on 26th August 1850, "that about a week before I went to Westmoreland, there came an invitation to Harden Grange, which, of course, I declined. Two or three days after a large party made their appearance here, consisting of Mrs Ferrand and sundry other ladies, and two gentlemen; one tall and stately, black-haired and whiskered, who turned out to be Lord John Manners; the other not so distinguished, shy, and a little queer, who was Mr Smythe, the son of Lord Strangford. I found Mrs F. a true lady in manners and appearance, very gentle and unassuming. Lord John Manners brought in his hand a brace of grouse for papa, which was a well-timed present: a day or two before papa had been wishing for some." Here are companion pictures, which pleasantly confirm one another.

hale, exhaust to its supreme essence this last stray breath of youth and feeling—which I owe all to you, *mio caro*, for bringing me to Scotland." And then he rallies his friend for his sins against Catholic consistency. "As for me," he writes, "I should like to take the vows of St John of Jerusalem: and intend to go over to Lord Lovat's (where the Fieldings are staying) to discover the exact process of mind by which one glides to Rome, and immediately to Heaven. Is this irreverent? I beg your pardon, John, but I have been to Kirk and can't help it. Such a discourse as we had against Puseyism, Prelacy, and 'beggarly crucifixes,' old Aberdeen asleep, and the child of his age and heart (Arthur) indignant and unquiet."

A month later they have changed places. George Smythe would have answered to his friend's "silvery light of mirth as from an endless well" if he could. "But," says he, "I am low, dejected, heart-shrouded, funereal—all out of reaction—from a time so charged with intermittent light and careless Elysium. Coffins, however, carry their silver plates, and the main relief to my melancholy is the thought of our old brotherhood, so gloriously renewed, and the memory of you—

> "'*Our former creed* retouching here and there,
> And deepening every line,'

even in a breast flinty and scarred and jagged as mine had been. Success go with you ever, dearest John, and fame equal to your virtues. I will not, how-

ever, more sadden your *Io Paean* by a jarring note." And so he descends, or ascends, to gossip—gossip of Roebuck, "our Anglican Marat," of Brougham and Gladstone and Lincoln, light-hearted gossip, which gives the lie to his depression, and shows how swiftly the sun shone through his overcast sky. However, his confession of misery instantly brought a letter of encouragement, which Smythe acknowledges both useless and undeserved. "Ah, John," says he, "even you cannot galvanise the dead! . . . And then again I felt that to a certain extent I had swindled you out of a sympathy to which I had no right. For you assumed that my 'black fit,' consequent on the reaction of our happy time, was chronic, whereas it resulted only from the first plunge into London fog, in which by the time I received your answer, with my usual adaptative habit, I had already begun to disport myself, as if it was the garden of the Great Master whom the nineteenth century worships—Epicurus." Meanwhile he was living in "a quiet little coterie," dining out and going to plays three times a week, a true inhabitant of the garden, and forgetting his doctrine only to ask for news of Dizzy.

Then after a silence of three months, during which he has been torpidly and inanely occupied *operose nihil agendo*, he "once more inters his friend's spirits in the Dunciad of his confidence." He describes two dinners at Hayward's, one of which, though Mrs Cochrane "looked beauty and spoke epigrams," was a dead *fiasco*. This he attributed to Kinglake, "who,

always silent, seemed dejected, and this prevented general conversation." Not so the other dinner—only Lincoln, Mrs Norton, and the Francis Gordons. "I don't admire Mrs Norton, as you know," he wrote, "but her wit, humour, anecdote, satire on this occasion are worthy of her grandfather. Her stories of Lady Pigott (*née* Benyon) and of Charley Napier in the Tagus are such as might tempt you to a pilgrimage up to London to come and hear. She was really divine." John Manners did not agree with George Smythe in disliking Mrs Norton, for whom he cherished a warm admiration, and was doubtless ready to believe in the divinity of her talk. But not even Mrs Norton could save Smythe from being bored in London, and in a few days he had set off for Brussels on his way to Vienna. From Brussels he wrote his friend a letter full of the old enthusiasm. He was with a great man of affairs in whose converse his mind worked most easily, and he imparted his proud joyousness to his friend.

"Instead of friendship," he wrote on 23rd December 1850, "I am drunk—it is the only word—with historic politics. Prince Metternich gives me the run of his house like a tame cat. I breakfast, dine, and go in when I like. He gave me four hours yesterday in a course of German politics. And to-night he read to me alone a character of Napoleon and the *précis* of his interview with him in 1813. Upon my word, dearest John, I am so flattered and made much of that I don't know whether I am standing

on my head or feet. But this I know—I would have cut off both for one smile of the Princess. Not that she would awaken love (in one presumptuous particle) in me (though I adore all old women, as you know), but because she arouses me to all the enthusiasm of 17, in adoration of all the genius which illustrates her decadent position, but uncomplaining grandeur of Soul. She has the gift of heroes—to attach and rivet at first sight. And I believe that much as I hate that Parliament on horseback, Hungary, if she (a Zichy) bade me become one, I should cast away my senses in unhesitating fanaticism. . . . If Metternich gives me any lights on our vexed question in England, I will pass them on to you, like a Greek in the Olympic Lamp-Race, for I have no Parliamentary legs to run upon. . . . Both Metternich and She spoke in the highest terms of Disraeli, whom they know and greatly admire, she, woman-like, eulogising the genius of his face."

Thus not even cynicism could get the upper hand of his abiding interest in affairs. If the politics of England were now nothing to him, if he found himself an outcast in the House of Commons, without a party and without attachments, he could still regard the great game as played on the Continent with a passionate fervour. In his next letter, written at Dresden on 2nd January 1851, he becomes for the moment reminiscent. "Travelling alone," says he, "and therefore necessarily much meditating on the past, I cannot tell you how much I have to thank

you for—the greenest, freshest, most unreproachful relations of my life—in Memory." And then he attempts to explain the difference in their outlook. "I am sorry," he writes, "that we so evidently disagree about the Catholic shindy. But my sorrow is not without alloy. For I am a Poet (incomplete) in my politicks, as I am in everything else: and you are essentially and must be (if it is only to realise my old Sonnet and maiden prophecy of Greatness) a statesman."

Looking back thus happily to the past, he spares a critical eye for Dresden. "The women here are ugly," he says, "ill-dressed, dowdy, and talk inferior French. I was presented to the King yesterday, and went to a Court Ball—whence my hostile verdict on their charms. Ah! if they were all like that grand Princess Metternich, and 25 years younger than she! Certes, the 'Chronicle' brought me much infamous fortune—it played a good card for me in that quarter. For Prince Metternich told me that he had himself caused my articles to be translated (in '48) in the German papers, still under his unrecognised influence. She called me *Loup-Garou*, for in England they had sent through my father to know me: but I had declined, as I went out nowhere."

As he travels eastward his enthusiasm increases, and he gladly exchanges for the "sympathetic details" of his Providence, "in acts of little kindness, as well as in the mainstay of my life," the news which he

gathered living within the hearsay of great views. At Vienna he encounters a hero, who goes far to eclipse Metternich himself. "You will be surprised that I am still here," he writes on 16th January 1851. "But I love Austria, and since he has been here have seen much of a Great Man of Plutarchian mould and dimensions—Prince Felix Schwartzenberg. I come from dining with him, and almost my last words to him were: 'Your Highness represents the word *thorough* of our Strafford, but you have *écrasé* the Revolutionary spirit.' 'No,' said he with energy, 'it is not *écrasé*, but I will pursue it with fire and with sword.' *Verbatim* his words, but nothing can give you an idea of the manner. His contempt for words, diplomacy, speechifying, Constitutions is so marked, so frequent, and so trenchant that it would offend any Englishman not of our old Young England school. . . . He is a soldier—too much so for Society—stern, the sternest man in manner I ever saw. Do you know his recent career? At the end of '47 and the beginning of '48, the King of Naples, ass-like, took the Revolutionary line, insulted the Austrians, or at least the lazzaroni did, and gave insufficient reparation. Schwartzenberg, Austrian minister, himself struck his flag. . . . For a glorious action he obtained—he being general of Brigade—the Cross of Maria Theresa, never given by the Stalls of the Order except for an action of *éclat*. (There are only two crosses in the world, our Duke and Radetzky.) On the recapture of Milan he was named in honour

Governor of Milan. I forgot to say that he had been wounded on the battlefield, gone to Vienna for his wound's treatment, and there, when Latour was murdered, offered to General Arenberg, who left the city, to clear the Grande Place with six hundred men. From the Government of Milan he was called away, to be named Prime Minister of Austria. There is nothing in Plutarch so fine as those two years of his life. He governs here with glove and glaive of iron. In talking of the Dresden conferences, he said, 'One serious thing I have done—a hundred thousand men for the future to be accorded to the Central government of Frankfort.' He is really a hero."

Thus the two friends exchanged their news and their pledges of friendship, as eagerly as they had done seventeen years before when they were boys at Eton. The one was a poet, the other a statesman—so far George Smythe spoke the truth; and each had something to give the other which he lacked. We can easily measure the relief which was brought to Lord John, immersed in domestic politics, perplexed by the Whigs' view of Catholicism, wondering if agricultural relief might be a valid substitute for protection, to receive George Smythe's heroic sketches of European policies and ministers. Nor was the debt any the less on the other side. John Manners' sympathy and admiration always restored George Smythe's confidence in himself, exorcised the blue devils who lay in wait to disturb his peace, and never were they obscured by circumstances

which might have justified misunderstanding. The active friendship remained unimpaired until George Smythe's death, and so long as Lord John lived, George Smythe was the friend whose memory he most happily recalled. The days of companionship at Eton and Cambridge, the sojourn at the Lakes, where they found Faber, the joyous strife of Young England, were ever present to his mind; and though he might have forgotten many a dull passage which lay between, those were for him always immune from oblivion.

The House of Commons to which John Manners returned in 1850 differed in purpose and manner from that which he left in 1847. Sir Robert Peel had been deposed for ever from the position of leadership; the ardent spirit of George Bentinck was quenched in death; and Disraeli, though hampered by two assessors, was the real head of the new "Conservative" Party. The House of Commons, as always happened when a weak Government was faced by a weak opposition, was timid and vacillating. On the one hand, the Tories, schooled to moderation by Disraeli, used far milder arguments on behalf of Protection than served them in the country; on the other hand, the Whigs, though they had won the victory, had but little confidence in their triumph. Even so stout a Whig as Charles Greville looked upon Free Trade as a "fearful and doubtful experiment." In fact there had been a revolution, and the country, not half conscious of it, proved its discomfort in a

feeling of unsettlement. If Lord John Russell was powerless, the Tories were not ready to dissolve and to take his place. "The Government has no absolute majority in the House," wrote John Manners to his father on 16th April 1852, "but depends on the mutual antipathies of other parties." Meanwhile, John Manners had resumed his work in Parliament as though it had known no interval. He took his place at once by his leader's side; and when the Triumvirate—Disraeli, Granby, and Herries—was incapacitated by illness, the conduct of the party fell upon him and Stafford.

Remaining true to his old principles, John Manners spoke with the greatest willingness on the Ten Hours Bill; and when Lord Ashley accepted the Government's compromise, and thus sacrificed the confidence of the working-classes, he took the lead of the Fielden party, and pleaded eloquently for what he called the Magna Charta of the Working-Classes. The Bill of 1847 had been evaded by the system of relays, and Lord John wished to see it amended, so that its original purpose might be fulfilled. Above all, he insisted, in vain, that children should not work after 5.30 in the evening, and opposed Lord Ashley, who was content with 6 o'clock as the limit of time. So much has been conceded wisely since 1852 for the protection of children, that the debate in which Lord John took an active part seems to-day strangely irrelevant. The Whigs and Radicals of that day looked upon children's lives as the material

of Free Trade. Their two staple arguments easily destroyed each other. They argued in the first place that the half-hour between 5.30 and 6 o'clock was not worth fighting about, and in the second, that if the half-hour was given up, the prosperity of England would be gone for ever. Lord John, setting the argument upon a high plane, had no difficulty in demolishing his opponents. "Would the House of Commons," he asked, "allow these poor people to be deprived of a boon which had been deliberately accorded them? That was the real question upon which they had to decide; and Heaven send that the decision of English gentlemen upon it might be in accordance with English honesty and English honour!" The whole speech showed that the spirit of Young England still breathed within Lord John's breast. He denied the right which the manufacturers claimed to do what they liked with their operatives, and he complained that "no sooner did an hon. member in that House ask for a little less toil for the child, than the manufacturers, who had been before so loud in their denunciations of protection, declared that they must be protected against this interference." He supported his case not only with sound sentiment and with sound argument, but with a petition signed by many of the best manufacturers in Lancashire, and he lost his amendment by 39 votes.

Throughout the session of 1850 Lord John proved himself a ready and eloquent debater. He spoke in the famous debate upon the affairs of Greece, a debate

which culminated in Lord Palmerston's famous peroration: "As the Roman, in days of old, held himself free from indignity, when he could say *Civis Romanus Sum*, so also a British subject, in whatever land he may be, shall feel confident that the watchful eye and the strong arm of England will protect him against injustice and wrong." In after years Lord John was wont to say that this speech of Lord Palmerston's turned the opinion of the House more swiftly than any other speech that ever he had heard. At the time he opposed the Minister's policy in a closely reasoned argument. He pointed out that Palmerston was valiant against small nations like Greece. He did not with a like eagerness protect British citizens who had been injured by the greater Powers. He wondered that when the hon. and learned member for Sheffield referred to America that the word did not blister his tongue. "Why, it was not two months ago when the noble Lord the Foreign Secretary declared in the House that he could not, or would not, protect the subjects of England against the tyranny of an American State." That which had happened in Republican America had happened also in Republican France. "No sooner had that Republic been established, than a quiet and industrious body of English residents there had been despoiled of their goods, forcibly expelled from their houses, and forced penniless and friendless to this country, to solicit, and to solicit in vain, for justice at the hands of this Government against the French Republic. Did the noble

LADY JOHN MANNERS.

(From a painting by R. Buckner at Belvoir Castle.)

Lord on that occasion make use of his power—of his fleets? No; there was a subscription." Indeed, no matter what was the subject of debate, Lord John expressed the faith that was in him, and came loyally to the aid of his party. On agricultural distress, on Irish education, on the Ecclesiastical Commission, he spoke with equal authority. He did his best to save the trees in Hyde Park, which were threatened by the approaching exhibition; and when Parliament was prorogued on 15th August 1850, there were few of his colleagues in opposition who stood higher than he did.

In 1851 his marriage with Miss Catherine Louisa Georgina Marlay, the daughter of Colonel Marlay, C.B., brought a happy interruption to his political career. No marriage was ever made under brighter auspices. His friends welcomed the engagement with enthusiastic unanimity, and no sooner was it arranged than he went to Belvoir, where, he says, he "was received like a triumphant warrior." He himself was unrestrained, if humble, in his joy. "The days have glided away in one long dream of happiness," he wrote in his journal: "enchanting walks in Kensington Gardens or the Park, and all the romance of love-making. I am twenty again, and drinking deeply of the intoxicating cup. On Sunday we lunched with the Cochranes, and G. S. S. dined with us afterwards. I try and hope to keep up all my old happy friendships and connections. She is all and more than I ever expected or dreamed." He made no attempt to

hide his delight from his friends, and they were eloquent in congratulation. Only Disraeli he approached with a certain diffidence. He understood very clearly what his help and support meant to his colleague, and he feared that the news might not be altogether agreeable to him. "But do not think," he wrote, "that my poor services, such as they are, will be lost to you in St Stephen's. She is too sensible to wish me for a moment to turn aside from the career before me; and you know from experience how useful and encouraging an auxiliary a Wife may be to a Public man. Pray solicit that Wife's approbation and good wishes for the step I am taking." Disraeli responded with the kindly sympathy expected of him. "My own experience tells me," said he, "that domestic happiness, far from being an obstacle to public life, is the best support of an honourable ambition, and I am sure that you will prove no exception to this satisfactory result. Miss Marlay will be united to the best and the most amiable of men, and one of the cleverest, and I hope it may be my privilege often to witness the certain felicity of herself and that husband for whom I entertain a sincere friendship."

They were engaged in March, they were married on 10th June 1851, and no cloud ever darkened their brief happiness. After a honeymoon spent at Stanton Woodhouse, they set out on their travels, and for the only time in his life John Manners gladly and willingly shook the burden of politics from his back. "Beresford, I suppose"—thus he wrote to Granby from

Brussels on 22nd July 1851,—"has cursed me by all his Gods for my flight; but the steadiest hack will bolt on occasions, and if the first summer of a man's married life ain't a justifying occasion, what is, I should like to know?" At any rate, for three months his emancipation was complete. He forgot all his sanguine hopes of Protection, his fears of Derby's inactivity. He met no politicians; he saw no papers; even Granby's speech at Waltham escaped him; and he asked for news with half a heart. He and his new companion on life's journey travelled as they would, sufficient one for another. From Brussels to the Rhine they voyaged, from the Rhine to Lausanne and Geneva and Thun, thence to Milan and Turin, and at their leisure back to Paris and London again. Nothing checked their happiness save the rain, and a premonition which seemed slight enough of Lady John's illness. Few incidents disturbed their tranquillity, except an encounter at Turin with Rachel, and that ended in a letter of regret from the actress, which Lord John treasured until the end. "At Turin," he wrote to his brother, "Rachel was next door, and kept us awake till six o'clock in the morning ranting and reciting, till in a frenzy I outranted her, and next day brought a curious letter of apology, which I keep." [1]

[1] The letter, so long kept, deserves to be transcribed here, faulty grammar and all. It is addressed simply *à mon voisin*, and thus it runs: "Monsieur, veuillez je vous prie agréer mes sincères regrets pour le bruit involontairement fait chez-moi cette nuit à une heure où tout le monde doit repose. Mon excuse est toute dans l'ignorance où j'etais qu'il y eut des

The year 1852 found Lord John back upon the treadmill of politics, facing with his colleagues a position of complete uncertainty. The Government which had resigned in 1851 had resumed office, and was still too weak to carry on the business of the country. It lived through the year only with the help of the great Exhibition, which diverted the general interest from politics and gave the incompetent ministers a respite. The Tories, still undecided, knew not whether they might safely take the reins of power were they thrown to them. They seemed to doubt whether they had intellect enough in the Commons to form a Government. Lord John, who never lacked confidence in himself or his principles, still believed that the solution of all our difficulties lay in Popular Toryism. "My head, so long unoccupied by English politics," he had written to his father on 19th December 1851, "is now full of them again, and though I have little expectation that men of experience and weight will think as I do, I am nevertheless sanguine that I can see my way to a policy, at once Tory, Protectionist, and Popular. I lay it down as an axiom that the operatives can be, and ought to

voisins si pres de mon apparten.ent. Ma jeune sœur a qui je faisais répéter un rôle nouveau a seul occasionné le bruit, qui malheureusement a troublé votre sommeil. Je vous le répéte, Monsieur, j'ai mille regrets de ce qui s'est passé, et je ne m'en consolerai pas si vous ne voulez bien me faire reponse que vous ne garderez aucun mauvais souvenir de l'ennui que nous avons pu vous causer. Faites-moi la grace, Monsieur, de croire à mes sentiments les plus distingués. Rachel." An elegant little letter, which received a fitting answer.

be, the firmest allies of a Tory and Protectionist Government; and that without their support in these times no Conservative Party can be really strong. How, then, can they be won to us? By a cautious expression of legislative sympathy." It was the old dream, redreamt, of 1844—a dream soon doomed to a rough awakening in the stern responsibilities of office. In the autumn of 1851 Palmerston had been dismissed from the Foreign Secretaryship, and a few weeks later, by moving a successful amendment to Lord John Russell's Militia Bill, satisfied an ardent desire for vengeance. On 23rd February 1852 the Government resigned, Lord Derby was sent for by the Queen, and Lord John Manners took his place in the Cabinet as First Commissioner of Works.

CHAPTER IX.

OFFICE.

Thus at the age of thirty-three John Manners was given office for the first time, and in the Cabinet. He had been absent for some years from the House of Commons, and had never proved his worth as an Under-Secretary. His position, therefore, was a clear testimony of the high esteem in which his colleagues held him, and at the same time a just reward for the excellent work which he had done in the country and in opposition. At the same time, as with characteristic chivalry he was the first to acknowledge, he owed his advancement largely to the services which Granby had rendered to the party. On the very day of his appointment he hastened to write to his brother. "The honours you have merited and won," said he, "I am wearing. Lord Derby, in offering the post to me, told me it was your guerdon he was bestowing upon me. I am anxious this should be known, as otherwise it might look as if I were put over your head—a thought peculiarly odious to me." Such was the generous temper in which the two brothers approached one another, and it was vastly to their

credit that, even in the stormy sky of politics, no cloud obscured the truth from either. One was taken and the other left, and all that can or need be said is that each followed the path congenial to him. As I have pointed out, Granby was a Die-hard, unready to take the orders of any master. John Manners, on the other hand, found his true calling in practical politics, was easy to work with, and would have been unhappy had he been debarred from devising schemes for his country's welfare.

To the journal, which Lord John kept rarely and at long intervals, he confided an account of his entry to the Cabinet—an account which I do not hesitate to transcribe at length. "One evening," he says, "I received a short note from Beresford, directing me to be at Lord Derby's in St James' Square at 12 o'clock. I went, was shown into a room in which were Sugden, Pakington, and some others of my future colleagues, all looking nervous and miserable. In a few minutes I was summoned into Lord D.'s library. He said, 'You are aware that Granby announced in the course of the winter his determination not to take office in the event of my forming a ministry. I regretted that determination, but it now enables me to have the pleasure of offering you the Woods and Forests with a seat in the Cabinet. It is a place that brings you a good deal in contact with the Queen and the Prince, and I have no doubt the choice I have made will be agreeable to them.' I had formed no idea as to the place I was likely to be

offered, and had but little idea of being turned at once from a plain M.P. into a Cabinet Minister. I therefore was taken by surprise, and stammered out a few words expressive of my fear that I shou'd disappoint him and render no effective service. 'Oh!' said he, 'you'll do well enough; I am confident.' Both manner and words were cordial and encouraging, and I returned to the other room with mixed feelings. Each future Minister had a separate colloquy with him, and then we were all ushered in to form our first Cabinet. He thanked us all for standing by him; said, with the single exception of Palmerston, he had not applied for aid to any out of his party; and that after their rejection of his overtures last year, if the Peelites wished to join him, it must be one by one as vacancies happened to occur. He then rapidly sketched the outline of the temporary policy he proposed to adopt, and said he should in less than an hour submit the list of our names to the Queen, by whom he did not doubt it would be graciously received.[1] Then came the memorable Privy Council,

[1] Here is the list submitted by Lord Derby:—

Earl of Derby . . .	First Lord of the Treasury.
Lord St Leonards . .	Lord Chancellor.
Mr Disraeli . . .	Chancellor of the Exchequer.
Earl of Lonsdale . .	Lord President of the Council.
Marquis of Salisbury .	Lord Privy Seal.
Earl of Malmesbury .	Foreign Secretary of State.
Sir John Pakington . .	Colonial Secretary of State.
Mr Spencer Walpole .	Home Secretary of State.
Earl of Hardwicke . .	First Lord of the Admiralty.
Mr Herries . . .	President of the Board of Control.
Lord John Manners . .	First Commissioner of Works.

at which 18 new Privy Counsellors were made, and we were in office."

Thus ended a memorable day in the adventure of life. And Lord John, when the curtain was drawn down upon the scene of pomp, lost no time in settling to the routine of his office. Lord Derby had told him that he would be brought into contact with the Queen and the Prince, and he speedily was summoned to attend Prince Albert. "He received me alone," he wrote in his journal, "motioned me to sit down, looked very nervous and awkward himself, and began to give me his views on all the subjects connected with my Department. It was impossible not to be struck by the largeness of many of his views, and the clearness of his expression of them; but it was evident that the bent of his mind was set against the impediments which a House of Commons raises to great schemes of that class. Being immersed in business, entirely ignorant of the very first principles of Art, and knowing nothing of the subjects on which he was discoursing, I maintained a discreet respectful silence, endeavouring to recollect as well as I could the purport of his remarks." In his ignorance of the problems which he was asked to solve, Lord John differed not at all from other Cabinet Ministers. In confessing his ignorance, even to himself, he rose above the most of his kind, and gave good earnest of his future success.

The questions which confronted him were many and various—Sewers, Intramural Interments, Building

Acts, Board of Health, Water Supply, besides the common business of the Department—and he tackled them all with skill and energy. Though he depended fearlessly upon the knowledge and loyalty of Philipps, the permanent Secretary, he realised very early that in important decisions he must rely upon his own judgment. He was diffident always. He was not of those who believe that what they do is right merely because they do it; but his diffidence did not impair his courage or weaken his sense of responsibility. Indeed, after some months of hard work he was able to reassure Granby of his competence. "I find increased facility," he wrote on 13th October 1852, "in getting through the business of this office, though I never was and never shall be a good man of affairs." Therein he underrated his talent, as he proved by an arduous session, in which he not only easily accomplished the routine of the Department, but cleared up the vast confusion bequeathed to him by the giant Exhibition, passed through both Houses more than one useful measure, and devised the funeral ceremony of the Duke of Wellington.

It seems strange to us, at this distance of time, that the fate of the Crystal Palace, which then covered some twenty acres of ground in Hyde Park, should have been hotly debated. It was made a party question between the aristocrats, who demanded its demolition, and the democrats, who claimed it for the people. The dispute was an example of political futility met with in every age. No sooner was the

great Exhibition over than the fate of the vast building, which had attracted thousands of sightseers, should have been sealed. The Royal Warrant which authorised the building of the palace was precise in its terms. The Commissioners were bidden not only to remove the buildings and their contents by the 1st day of June 1852, but "to restore the soil and surface of the park to its form before any part thereof was enclosed by the said Commissioners, ready for sowing with grass-seed, and to sow the same." It does not seem that there was here any room for doubt. Yet it was too good a chance for the Radicals to lose, and the Government was asked to violate its pledge in the sacred name of the people. Mr Heywood demanded a winter garden and scientific specimens as a small concession "to the opinions and wishes of the middle classes." Mr Hume saw in it a place of pleasant resort, where the poor might accompany moral training with intellectual instruction. The solemn debate, eminently characteristic of the Victorian age, was rudely interrupted by the worthy Colonel Sibthorp, whose incursion was like a gust of fresh air in a musty place. He said that he had on several occasions expressed his opinion upon this "so-called Crystal Palace," and he claimed that his conduct had conformed strictly with his opinion. "He had never entered it. If anybody offered him a thousand guineas—and even in those times of Californian gold a thousand guineas was no small sum—he would not enter the place. No, upon

principle he would not be dared to enter it. He considered it his duty to his fellow-creatures not to go into the place. The very sight of it sickened him."

Between the vague sentimentality of Heywood and Hume and the blunt Toryism of Colonel Sibthorp, Lord John Manners took a middle position. Speaking for his Department, he declined, on the one hand, to discuss the merits of the Exhibition ; on the other, to condone a manifest and flagrant violation of public faith. With a quiet irony he enumerated the uses to which it was proposed to put the building. According to the taste and fancy of ingenious persons, it was to be converted into "a ball-room, a covered ride, a lecture-room, a statue gallery, a garden, a forest, a casino, and last of all into a series of preaching-houses, where on Sundays every known sect might expound its views." It is impossible not to admire this last suggestion, which would have turned a vast building, designed for the proper exhibition of the arts and sciences, into a religious pandemonium.

Lord John had no difficulty in brushing aside these monstrous schemes. "If a lady of fashion," said he, "gives a great entertainment, and erects a tent leading from her drawing-room for the purpose of a ball, she does not, after it has answered its purposes, propose to convert that tent into a nursery, cow-house, or stable ; but if she wishes for any of these, she has a suitable building erected." And thus he refused to accept a policy of makeshift, or to connive at a breach of faith. To one plan only would he give

his sanction. The building might be removed and set up on a happier site, where, " untarnished by the recollection of broken public faith and violated public honour, it would conduce to the recreation of the working and toiling classes of this great metropolis." And moved it was to Sydenham, where it has contributed for many a year to our stock of harmless pleasures, and whence it is not likely to be taken away. But there was, as has been said, a time when its fate was hotly discussed, and the controversy which it aroused, and which was allayed by Lord John, is one among the lighter episodes recorded in the grave pages of Hansard.

That Lord Derby's Government should endure was impossible from the first. There was arrayed against it a busy and bitter coalition, and it carried in its own uncertainty the seeds of dissolution. Its duty was the duty of transition. It was asked to make the curve between the policy of Protection, which the Tories had supported gallantly six years ago, and the policy of Free Imports, to which the country was now committed. In honour it was bound not to desert the industries which Cobden, with the help of the Whigs and Peelites, had destroyed. The scheme proposed by Disraeli, of compensation to the suffering interests, was just if not heroic ; and though it did not go far enough in the way of retribution to please Lord John, he accepted it perforce as the one possible expedient of practical politics. " Disraeli is better," he wrote to his father on 3rd December 1852, " and will make

his financial statement this evening. The large increase of our national defences sadly curtails our means of granting fiscal relief: still I am confident our agricultural friends will recognise in our proposals a desire to render them justice." The statement was made, and revealed the measures of relief which Disraeli would have given to corn, sugar, and shipping, the three industries which the pedantry of Manchester had impaired. For a while the issue trembled in the balance, but in the end the Coalition triumphed in numbers as in debate. Each group in the Coalition found something to criticise in the budget, and they all obstinately refused to look upon it as a whole. But, as Lord John wrote in his journal, "the proposal to extend and double the House Tax was, as Hardwicke prophesied when it was first mentioned in the Cabinet, so d—d just as to secure our fall." And fall they did, victims to one of those coalitions which, in Disraeli's phrase, "although successful, have always found this, that their triumph has been brief," and which, as he added, "England does not love."

Thus ended, in the final defeat of protective measures, Lord John's first trial of office. Brief though it had been, it had made his position in future governments secure. In the meetings of the Cabinet he had proved himself of the highest service, clear without verbosity, firm without obstinacy. When the visit to Windsor had been paid, and the seals of office laid aside, he sketched in his journal, very briefly, the

character of Lord Derby as he had seen him in the council-chamber. "Lord Derby showed more forbearance and toleration of his colleagues' ignorance and official blunders," thus he writes, "than I had expected from his hastiness, love of fun, and the frightful amount of work he had to do. The number of letters, to be written in his own hand, alone might have been a man's work; and yet upon whatever subject I had to write to him, a most careful, full, and beautifully written answer always came. He showed great tact and delicacy in retrieving Walpole's false step when, in conducting the Militia Bill through the Commons, he proposed the military franchise on the recommendation of the Speaker. A Cabinet was called the next day, and Lord Derby had to dispose of the blunder without hurting Walpole's feelings. This he did by thanking him for the zeal and efficiency he had displayed, and reminding him of Mr Fox's saying that he would not give sixpence for a man who never blundered."

But it was to Disraeli, his friend and comrade, that he gave his first thought. "You have, I think, on a calm survey of all that has happened during the last ten months"—thus he wrote on 22nd December 1852, two days after resignation,—"every reason to be satisfied. Your position as Leader in the House of Commons is clearly established, Court jealousies are removed, the Country in the main satisfied with your financial ability, and the third party henceforward absorbed in the Whigs." Thus, as always, he thought

more of his friend than of himself, and knew that at last the time of his friend's probation was past.

Meanwhile, on 16th April 1852, a son had been born to Lord John, and it seemed as though he had touched the zenith of good fortune. George Smythe congratulated him in his own manner. "Great, however, as I hope he may prove," he wrote on 17th April, "he will never achieve what you have in one year. Married, become a Cabinet Minister, refused the representation of Liverpool, and given an heir to the old line of Belvoir." And then a few days later: "I envy you all things, but nothing so much as acting with a man of genius, the friendship of whom is the gift of the Gods. I am not toadying you"—the protest was unnecessary,—"for I hate your low German pseudo-aristocratic high life below stairs." When George Smythe spoke of envy, he spoke of that which was never in his soul. I think that John Manners must, in a letter, have taxed him with using a word which for him had no meaning. For on 18th October 1852 Smythe resumes the argument. "I cannot envy you," says he, "for I love you too much; and I do not think that I am naturally envious. . . . When once the strong energetic days of boyhood passed away, I cannot put to my conscience that I ever envied anybody." And if he knew no envy, neither had he the slightest interest in English politics for himself. The Tories had taken a path where he could not follow them, and, despite his affection for Disraeli and John Manners, he thought that they hastened to the worship of

false gods. "When I came to you and your party," he wrote, "I foolishly fancied that it might be given one to redisintegrate and restore one's youth's dream. Ever together, I had imagined that Dizzy and you and I might have renewed the ancient faith with the ancient relations. But I had miscalculated all the vicissitudes of the long interval, in which, by Ambition, we are separated. And I found you merging politics in far dearer ties, and Diz, with views, office-spurred, of the immediate and the practical, rather than with those of more difficult, but of graver inspiration, in their true influence upon a world which, let the positive say what it will, is governed by Idea." Here he makes the old contrast between the man of dreams and the man of action. If he could not bring events to the heel of his thoughts, he would let them go whither they would. His sense of duty, less strong than John Manners', his ambition a very feeble impulse, compared with that which carried Disraeli to the heights, yielded instantly to the mere memory of an Idea, and he knew, rightly enough, that it was not for him to save his country.

Disillusioned as he was, ready always to confess himself the victim of worthless company, he resented bitterly that his friends should fall below the standard he had set up for them. He was unhappy when he saw his hero, Disraeli, subjected happily to what he considered a wrong influence. "Puzzled I was (I have been staying with him)," he writes in the same letter, "to see how really and apart from all paradox,

Diz is governed by H. Lennox. I see now how vain an ass I was in my Young England days, when I attributed to my intellect the favour, which I see he must have accorded to his personal friendships only, for myself." Herein George Smythe, as often, underrates himself and the help which he gave to his friend. The service which he rendered to Disraeli was very different from that rendered by Henry Lennox. The Young England Movement was a movement of ideas which its leaders generously pooled, and George Smythe and John Manners were able to interchange with Disraeli such thoughts as he took from and gave to none other. And then he concludes his letter with the hasard of a rash opinion. " I believe not in war," says he. " There is no spirit, I am sure, in the West, and arguing from analogy I don't suppose the East is more heroically furnished." Lord John was a truer prophet. As early as 1st August 1853 he told his father that he was sceptical about the satisfactory termination of the Eastern dispute. In that mood of scepticism he remained until the war broke out ; and though he agreed with his party that the war need never have taken place, that the Tsar was taking advantage of Aberdeen's weakness, he agreed with his friends that no obstacle should be set in the way of the Ministers who were responsible for the conduct of the campaign.

And then, as though the gods were jealous of his good fortune, a sudden and remorseless tragedy overtook him. On 7th April 1854 Lady John Manners died.

They had been married but three years. No disillusion had ever marred their dream of happiness ; no shadow had been cast upon the sunshine of their common life. Lord John was heartbroken and inconsolable. " Shut up this book," he wrote in his journal ; " the sun is taken from my heaven. All is gloom and hopeless sorrow so far as this earth is concerned, and how am I to hope for happiness in another ? " He found a sad assuagement of his grief in writing an account of her illness and death, and in sketching for his son the character of the mother who would be to him not even a faded memory. He prefaced the few moving and beautiful pages which he wished to be " carefully preserved for his son's reading," by Dr Johnson's memorable letter to James Elphinstone on the death of his mother, a letter poignantly appropriate for solace : " I cannot forbear to mention that neither reason nor revelation denies you to hope that you may increase her happiness by obeying her precepts ; and that she may, in her present state, look with pleasure upon every act of virtue to which her instructions or example have contributed. Whether this be no more than a pleasing dream or a just opinion of separate spirits is, indeed, of no great importance to us, when we consider ourselves as acting under the eye of God ; yet surely there is something pleasing in the belief, that our separation from those whom we love is merely corporeal ; and that it may be a great incitement to virtuous friendship, if it can be made probable that that union that has

achieved the divine approbation shall continue to eternity."

Thus Samuel Johnson stretched out his brave kindly hand over the years to bring a thought of hope to a man in sorrow. With this fitting preface Lord John drew a character of singular beauty and selflessness, of one naturally gay and happy, wholly unworldly, and constant in her thought for others: "With so much to tempt her out of the ways of humility," thus he wrote in the fulness of his grief, "she retained an eye, an ear, and a hand always open to the sorrows of the poor and humble, and often shamed me by the frank kindness with which she addressed those who applied to her; but, though thus remarkably abounding in charity and humility, her innate good sense and quick perception restrained her from foolish generosity and indiscriminate alms-giving. Reason and feeling went hand in hand, and guided all her actions." Sincere and independent of mind, she judged men and things for herself. "Merit in any rank she highly esteemed; and for the lack of it, not the highest distinctions or the most brilliant talents could atone in her estimation; for this reason she disliked and distrusted politics and politicians, believing that expediency and not principle too generally guided them; and great as was her love for me, she never concealed her disapprobation of some of my political connections." Indeed, she revealed always what was in her mind. "Truthfulness was another of her prominent characteristics," wrote

Lord John. "She not only never said what she did not think, but ever spoke out what she thought. Concealment was not only foreign but hateful to her noble nature."

Nothing but time could mitigate the force of so heavy a blow as had fallen upon Lord John. Such consolation as could be afforded by the affection of his father, the warm-hearted loyalty of his brother Granby, the deep sympathy of his friends, was freely given him. The letters then interchanged breathe the true spirit of friendship and sorrow. "This is terrible—terrible," wrote George Smythe. "But you are good and gentle and true and great—without one single enemy in the world, and with one more Angel to guide and guard you in the next. Therein must lie your consolation. How much must you now understand the real Presence." Disraeli's words brought a genuine solace to him. "Your letter," wrote Lord John in reply, "came perhaps at the time best suited to its kind intention, when the sorrowing heart is most open to the consolation and sympathy of friends—and the idea it places before me is true and beautiful and encouraging." The encouragement lasted but a moment, and Lord John sought in change of sky what the companionship of friends could not give him—a brief respite from sorrow. From London he went with Mrs Marlay to the Isle of Wight, thence to Bournemouth, and in the autumn to Pau. He travelled to little purpose. "Neither sunshine nor blue skies nor dancing waves nor human

sympathy," thus he wrote to Granby from Ventnor on 4th May 1854, "can make me for one hour forget the reality of my bereavement." When Disraeli promised him at Hughenden "no strangers, faithful friends, and in public affairs, to which you must bring your mind, an inexhaustible source of conversation, bracing to the mind and spirits," he sent a reluctant refusal. "I am sure that what you say is both wise and kind," he answered, "and I am not without hope that after a time my mind may accommodate itself to its new conditions, and enable me once more to be occupied in public affairs; but now —I cling to solitude and memory."

To solitude and memory he clung until the end of the year. And then on Christmas Eve 1854 he sends on to Disraeli a letter from Augustus Stafford, dated "Flagship, Kavata Bay, 3rd December," a letter in which Stafford "managed to compress within a small compass an Iliad of horrors"—a pitiful record of disease and death. "I have been all over our camp," says Stafford, "and marvel, not that some die but that any live, horses or men, soldiers or officers." The army was less besieging than besieged. The men were having only a half or quarter rations served out to them, and slept in the trenches from exhaustion. "In short," Stafford writes, "it is our Sebastopol." Lord Raglan wrote despatches and letters, and was never seen in camp. What Stafford demanded was investigation and discussion, knowing that little good would come of dealing privately and confi-

dentially with Newcastle. So he asks that his letter should be sent to Disraeli, and its instant transmission marks the partial return of Lord John to the world of affairs. By April 1855 he was beginning again his regular attendance at the House of Commons, and was getting through as best he might the kindly greetings, which he knew were inevitable. The first speech he made after his return was in opposition to Sir J. Pakington's Education Bill, whose purpose was to provide free schools for the people. Lord John opposed the Bill upon grounds which still hold good. "The House would have to inquire," said he, "whether the measure was not based on the contravention of the principle of independence and spirit which happily existed throughout our population; whether it would not go to break down their spirit and destroy their peace of mind." Time has answered that question in the sense in which Lord John expected it to be answered, and his comment upon the inevitable consequences of the Bill prove what a clear gift of prophecy was his. He foresaw, as has indeed come to pass, that free schools would introduce "confusion, conflict, religious bickering, every element which should be kept out of play in a question of education."

Until the Great War came upon us in 1914, the life and thought of the nation had never been rudely disturbed by war. The conflict with Napoleon, less bitterly intensive than the conflict with Germany from which we emerged in 1918, exercised little influ-

ence over the written letters or the popular fiction of the day. Though it was the stuff of which the politicians made their speeches, though the Radicals of the moment were inspired by its progress to cover their country's enemy with praise, the sound part of the nation seemed to take it for granted, as though its conduct were in good hands and might safely be left there. If you search the correspondence of a hundred years ago you will find few references to a long and bitter strife upon whose issue depended the life of Europe. Even Sir Walter Scott, stout Tory and patriot if ever there was one, is silent in writing to his friends about what we might have thought was the one event which really mattered. It was not until the campaign in the Peninsula brought the final victory in sight that Scott was impelled to discourse in his letters of what in the historian's imagination overshadowed the world. And if in the days of Napoleon there was a kind of indifference, the indifference to those who were contemporary with the war in the Crimea is far more easily intelligible. It was not about the Crimea that friends wrote when they exchanged letters in 1854-5. The strife was committed to other hands, and, until the news of the hardships which the soldiers endured stirred the people to anger, little enough was said about the campaign.

So it is that you will search the letters of Lord John in vain for any reference to the war which was being fought amid the snows of Russia. As

I have said, he sent on to Disraeli the impassioned appeal of Augustus Stafford. For the rest, it was not until the terms of peace aroused the general indignation that he discussed the matter with his father and his brother, Granby; and then it was rather as a politician that he wrote than as a friend. Neither the peace nor its terms aroused much enthusiasm in the country. Where the purpose of the war was ill-understood there could not be a loudly expressed joy at its result, and when neither side claims the victory the note of triumph is seldom heard. The discussions in the Houses of Parliament were languid and inconclusive. "There was," Lord John wrote to his father on 1st February 1856, "as you will have seen, no real debate in our House at all; the feeling appeared to be one of doubt, hesitation, and distrust. I have never heard so little cheering. Nothing seems to be known for certain, unless it be that the French ministers have made large sums by speculating on the Peace." Even those who attacked the Government were not always willing to follow up their attack with an adverse vote. "The debate speaks for itself," wrote Lord John to his father on 2nd May 1856. "I hardly know which class of speeches were more damaging to the Government—that of their opponents or that of their defenders, including themselves. When Sir James Graham sat down last night, Mr Napier, who was next to me, turned round and said, 'He finds them guilty, but recommends them to mercy.'" Lord Derby, thinking ill enough of the

Treaty, deprecated a division in the House of Commons; "but," said he, writing on 4th May 1856 to Lord John, "you must be better judges of what that House will do. The omission of any clause against the extension of Russian Power in the Caucasian Provinces is no doubt a serious blot on the Treaty, and the gratuitous surrender of our maritime rights is in my mind still more censorable; but what can you do with an Army which will not fight?" Little enough, and truly the army of the Tories had not much spirit for the fray.

The surrender of Kars and the vacillation and incompetence which led up to it were for a moment a rallying cry, but not even that, sound though it was, was sound enough to unite the scattered forces. Lord John, according to his wont, did not waver from the course which he thought right. He followed Whiteside in throwing the whole blame of the failure at Kars upon the Government, and censured bitterly the conduct of Panmure and Clarendon. He feared not the arms of Russia for Turkey: he feared the diplomacy of England. The diplomacy of England refused to recognise that the real danger to the integrity and independence of Turkey lay not in Europe but in Asia. It permitted Russia to acquire important territories in Circassia, and it failed to exact for England the respect due to its prestige and its prowess. "As an Englishman," said Lord John in his speech delivered on 5th May 1856, "I could not but feel that the representatives

of halting hesitating Prussia, and even the representatives of Sardinia, occupied far higher ground in these negotiations than did the representatives of the Queen of Great Britain. Their opinions were at least always clearly stated and manfully sustained; but when Lord Clarendon stated some opinion of paramount importance, it seemed to be hinted at only to be withdrawn."

It is characteristic of the prevailing uncertainty that, while Lord John followed his party in denouncing the Treaty, Lord Granby spoke stout words on the other side. His disagreement from his former friends had been so frequent as to cause little surprise, and the speech which he made in the debate of 6th May 1856 did but dissociate him still further from the Tories. "As one of those who thought we entered into this war without sufficient cause," said he, "I beg to be allowed to express my satisfaction at the peace which has been concluded. . . . In my opinion the Treaty gives us all that we have a right to expect, and is one which the people of this country will accept." He even exonerated the Government from all blame in the pitiful surrender of Kars. "Kars had fallen," he declared, "from the cupidity of the Pashas in the first instance; from sluggishness and inattention in the second instance; and thirdly, from the want of energy, in this case, on the part of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe." His argument and accent differed completely from Lord John's, who was still working and thinking with Disraeli. But the

change of opinion meant no change of sentiment, and Lord John's comment was characteristic. "It has long been a joke between us three brothers," he wrote to his father on 2nd May 1856, "that if by any extraordinary chance we all vote in the same lobby, there can be no pretence for any human being going into the opposite one." There could be no doubt with which of his sons the Duke of Rutland agreed, and to him Lord John wrote more gravely a few days later. "Happy am I to think," said he, "that the part I am able to take in public affairs is in any degree consolatory to you; but you well know from whom all your children have derived their ideas of public and of private duty. Granby spoke his mind manfully, as he always does, on Tuesday, and now I conclude our differences on the Peace are at an end." Thus, in the debate on the peace, Lord John came openly back from his retirement, and took his place once more as a leader of his party.

The earliest office held by Lord John was, as we have seen, the First Commissionership of Works. To this office he returned twice—in 1858 and 1866,—and a word may be said here of his qualifications for the post, of the wise deeds that he did while he held it He was, as I have said, no expert in artistic matters; he made no pretence to infallibility in knowledge or taste; he listened gladly to the advice of those who were familiar with the arts; and based his own —generally sane—opinion upon the evidence of others.

It is easy to condemn the indifference which most Governments display in their attitude towards the Fine Arts. There are too many stories of the blind ignorance of Ministers, and of the hardships which they have inflicted upon unfortunate architects and sculptors, for us to have any doubt that the charges which have been brought of suspicion and neglect are well founded. Officials have too often taken it for granted that the artists whom they oppressed were wilfully idle if they were not fraudulent. They can, as a rule, see no difference between a contract made with a tallow-chandler and a contract signed by an artist who would shed his life's blood for his work, and who thinks far less of the reward which may be his some day than of his perfected masterpiece. Lord John was more happily inspired. To his foresight and forbearance the nation owes its finest monument, set up in St Paul's, to the honour and glory of the Duke of Wellington. By his enlightened and sympathetic treatment of Alfred Stevens, he placed himself apart from his colleagues. No sooner had he selected and approved the design, which bore the motto "I know but one art," than he remained loyal to the sculptor, then young and unknown, Alfred Stevens.

The choice of Stevens aroused, as might have been expected, a vast deal of clamour. The motley committee of military gentlemen and officials, who were called together to advise upon a delicate matter of artistic merit, frowned disapproval. The spirit of

compromise always alive in Parliament suggested that, as the site had been changed, another competition should be held. Lord John was obdurate. He had made his choice, and he meant to abide by it. "He thought," said he in the House of Commons, "that, by a certain adaptation of the design, No. 18, which could be made, a monument worthy of the great man whose memory it was intended to celebrate, and of the new site selected for it, would be insured." And that nothing should be left to chance, the First Commissioner ordered a model of the arch to be fashioned, and tried over each of the selected designs. This experiment proved that Stevens's design was not only much the most clearly suitable: it was the only one that was suitable at all. The architects, moreover, were in accord with Lord John, and thus it was that the great Duke, fortunate in his life, was fortunate also in being honoured by the noblest monument that has been set up in London for many centuries. On 9th September 1858 Stevens was authorised to begin the work. For him it was a gift that was no gift; for us it is an imperishable possession.

When the commission was given, it was agreed (not without reason) that a full-size model should be set up, as soon as might be, in St Paul's itself. Stevens, unhappily, misread the condition, and instead of making a rough model of painted boards and canvas, constructed a solid model, the mere business of moving which was at once hazardous and costly. More than this: by an act of folly, characteristic of govern-

ments, which delight to give with one hand and to take with the other, the sum of £6000 was abstracted from the £20,000 offered for the monument, and presented, a consolation, to the first two prize-winners, who were asked in exchange to decorate the Cathedral with *bassi relievi* in marble. A yet worse hardship for Stevens was that at each change of government he was subject to the control of another Chief Commissioner, and that he could not rely upon an understanding sympathy. In 1863 and 1864 he received anxious letters from the Board of Works, and left them unanswered. Two years later Lord Cowper, then Chief Commissioner, "could not help coming to the conclusion that Stevens had not found his capacity or his perseverance equal to his conception of them," and extracted a promise from the sculptor that his model should be completed by the beginning of 1867.

By that time Lord John was back at the Board of Works, resolved to shield Stevens from persecution, and to see that the country got the full benefit of his genius. He did his best to smooth over the financial difficulties which were heavily oppressing the poor artist, and, finding that no more than £3734 was due to him, urged that his necessities should be met generously, that he should not be held meanly to his contract. Alas for Stevens! In 1870 Lord John was replaced by Ayrton, who owed his office less to his merits than to the fear with which his caustic criticism had inspired Mr Glad-

stone. He was a veritable scourge of artists. He was gifted beyond his fellows with the anti-artistic temperament, and he attacked Stevens furiously, as though he were a dishonest contractor. Of the doubts and perplexities and hardships which had assailed Stevens he knew and cared nothing. He was indifferent to the fact that Stevens was fashioning for England a thing of beauty. He had a short way with artists, and having examined the accounts, discovered that, while on the one hand Stevens had received eleven-twelfths of the money, he had not done more than seven-twelfths of the work.

Here was a discrepancy which every one would appreciate, and which justified the sternest measures. Stevens was ordered to surrender all his models and his moulds—everything, in short, that had to do with the monument. These were collected, boarded up, and sealed in Stevens's studio by the busy hand of Ayrton, who thought, perhaps, that they would grow as easily into a work of art without Stevens's aid as with it. Then, lest any lover of the arts should accuse him of lacking generosity, he offered Stevens £2 a month rent as long as the materials of his masterpiece, which he was not permitted to touch, remained in his studio. O rare device! At last a plan was accepted by both sides, which protected Stevens from Ayrton's interference, and the result of which was that two years after Stevens's death in 1877 the monument was completed. In accord with this plan, " the actual working

out of the design," so says a Parliamentary report, "was left in the hands of Mr Stevens, but all payments were to be made by Mr Collman, a lifelong friend of the artist, whether for materials, for wages, or for the subsistence and remuneration of the sculptor himself." It is surprising that the subsistence and remuneration of the artist was thought of consequence. However, the plan worked well enough, and Stevens gave Ayrton the immortality which otherwise he might have missed, by setting upon the figure of Falsehood in the monument his features faithfully depicted. And when we contemplate the masterpiece of Stevens's art, it is well to remember that without the wise choice and the constant sympathy of Lord John Manners, it would never have been completed.

One other episode in Lord John's tenure of the Board of Works deserves more than a passing reference. It was his to play a spirited part in the Battle of the Styles. The choice of Gilbert Scott as architect of the Foreign Office set aflame the contest which had been waged for some years between Gothic and Classical. It was not a controversy about æsthetics. The emotions, the passions, which it aroused were political or sentimental. Leading articles were written in 'The Times,' and the tranquillity of public life was disturbed by a violent war of pamphlets. "Shall Gothic Architecture be denied fair play?" asked the chief of the disputants, as though for the moment it was not the spoiled child among the Arts. And by

a strange perversity, in this question, which speedily became a party question, the two parties seemed to have ranged themselves on the wrong sides. The Gothic Revival was, indeed, an offshoot of the Romantic Movement, and the Romantic Movement in France had been, as Victor Hugo said, liberalism in the arts. At any rate, it had broken with remorseless hand the chain which bound the arts to the tradition of the past. In England, on the other hand, the Romantic Revival, belated as it was, was a revival of Toryism. This was due to a series of accidents. In the first place, the immense prestige of Sir Walter Scott converted the Tories to the cause of Romance. Whatever else he was, the author of 'Waverley' was a Tory, and even Abbotsford appeared as a symbol of Toryism in spite of its exaggerations. And then the Cambridge Camden Society, to which, said Gilbert Scott, "the honour of our recovery from the odious bathos is mainly due," was propped and supported by the Tories. Above all, Young England professed a deep devotion to the Goths and their arts, and Lord John's advocacy of the revival is explained by his loyalty to that "new generation," which all but gave a new direction to English politics. Lord John, indeed, was but doing his best in 1856 to make the dreams of 1844 come true. Yet had the champions of the Gothic style forgotten their prejudices and their superstitions, they would have seen that their real sympathies should have been with the classical tradition—the tradition of continuity, of calm, of

measure, of reason. They should have left it to the Radicals to champion the architecture of the north, the style of revolution, of nature, of savagery. And what do we find? The country's taste changing with a change of government, Lord Palmerston defending the Palladian style against Lord John Manners, the champion of the Gothic, and divisions taken in the House of Commons, where all the voters seem to have strayed into the wrong lobbies. Truly it was, and still remains, a paradox.

The Goths had won the first round when Barry was compelled to run counter to his own genius and to build the House of Parliament in what he deemed an alien style; and when Gilbert Scott was chosen to design the new Foreign Office, the victory seemed complete. For, indeed, Gilbert Scott was more roughly Gothic than the Goths. For him, as we have seen, classical or Palladian architecture was "odious bathos." So fearful was he of contamination that he would have separated the two styles altogether, and had two professorships at the Royal Academy—one for Classic, the other for Gothic Architecture. However, his chance came in 1856, when he competed for the Government offices, and came in third for the Foreign Office. Palmerston, high-handed as always, passed over the competition, and appointed Pennethorne in Scott's stead, whereupon Scott and Barry, Goth and Classic, made a fierce protest, and set the Institute of Architects at work. Meanwhile, Palmerston's Government had gone out, and Lord John

Manners, once again at the Board of Works, ordered an inquiry. The Committee, fearing a definite pronouncement, found nothing to choose between the styles in convenience and cost, and advised the Board of Works to take either Scott's design or Barry's. It was not an heroic decision, and left matters much as they were. Scott was appointed, and England lost a masterpiece. Whereon Mr Tite, whose name lives in a famous street, and Lord Palmerston took the matter out of the realm of art, and inaugurated a campaign in Parliament.

In Parliament opinion was divided exactly on the line of parties. The Tories were pledged to vote for the Gothic style; the Liberals were warranted, without a dissentient, to support the Palladian. Scott, about whom the battle raged, thought it a forlorn hope. "Even Mr Disraeli," said he, "told me that there was no chance of carrying it, but Lord John Manners held firmly to his decision, and met the attack in Parliament manfully and with great success." Again there was a change of government, and Palmerston, the determined foe of the Gothic style, became once more supreme in the country. He made short work of Gilbert Scott's plans. Scott gives an account of a talk with him, which bears upon it the unmistakable mark of truth: "Lord Palmerston sent for me," wrote Scott, "and told me in a jaunty way that he would have nothing to do with this Gothic style; and though he did not wish to disturb my appointment, he must insist upon my making a design in the

Italian style, which, he felt sure, I could do quite as well as the other. That he heard I was so tremendously successful in the Gothic style that if he let me alone I would gothicise the whole country." Palmerston was a wise and safe prophet, and Scott had no better plan to follow than to wait for something to turn up.

So far as we may judge by parliamentary papers and speeches, Lord John was of opinion that the Gothic style was not only best suited to the new Foreign Office, but that it was the only proper and national style. Thus far had the sentiment of Young England carried him along the road of confusion. For the rest he relied as well he might on the verdict of the Committee, and adhered, when office gave him the power of choice, to the appointment of Gilbert Scott. He saw in his mind's eye the whole of Westminster harmoniously Gothic. "I can only say"—these were his words—"that, the site of the new Foreign Office being on the south side of Downing Street, and tending southwards to Westminster Abbey and the Gothic buildings of the Houses of Parliament, when the merits of the designs and styles are equally balanced, it is impossible to exclude some consideration of the *genius loci*." The weakness of his argument is proved by the fact that, when he pronounced the Gothic to be the national style, the other side reminded him of Inigo Jones and Christopher Wren, and remained unanswerable. In conclusion, sentiment and rhetoric were on the side of

the Tories, reason and taste on the side of the Liberals, and England got the Foreign Office she deserved. For us the episode is memorable, because it showed Lord John faithful to his old associations, and because it was the last occasion on which Young England found a practical expression in the House of Commons.

In 1857 Lord John's father died, to Lord John's profound and sincere grief. From his earliest childhood he had lived upon terms of an intimate if unequal friendship with his father, whose counsel he had always sought, and without whose approval and support he ventured to take no step in life. Yet there was no touch of subservience in his conduct, no touch of tyranny in his father's. If the son never hesitated to express and to act upon a contrary opinion, as in the matter of the election for the High Stewardship at Cambridge, the father never exacted what he thought was an unwelcome compliance. Lord John's friends had become the friends of his father, who had received Disraeli very warmly after an early protest, and Stafford gladly from the first. And of all his friends it was perhaps Stafford who most wisely gave him the consolation which he needed. "I think on that noble simplicity of character," wrote Stafford in a letter dated 22nd January 1857, which has an added pathos because it was the last letter that ever Stafford wrote to John Manners, "which won friendship and disarmed enmity, on all the perfect qualities of a Christian gentleman and on the high position he filled so

admirably till, even in this hour of affliction, I feel there ought to be joy in grief. He is where 'the future cannot contradict the past'; the life-book is written through, and it is a history that England should wish all her sons to study and to copy."

CHAPTER X.

"SORROW AND DEATH."

LORD JOHN MANNERS was, as we have seen, a firm and loyal friend. His political associations meant far more to him than to the most of men. Even his opinions, strongly as they were sometimes held, were swayed by sentiment. His quick memory of the past strengthened his attachments, and the loss of a friend was for him bitter and irreparable. He found a sad pleasure in recording the tragedies of his life, and a little bundle of letters, labelled "Sorrow and Death, 1857, 1858," is a lasting witness of his grief. For in those years there died, in circumstances of unexpected misery, the two greatest friends of his youth—Augustus Stafford and George Smythe. Stafford, some seven years older than Lord John, was such a friend as a young man might wisely have leaned upon. He seemed destined for a long and useful career, and it was only the freakishness of fortune which involved him in disaster. He was a wit and a scholar, a landlord both in England and Ireland, and a Tory with a deep love of his country and a high respect for its traditions. He was of a generous and a tolerant mind. "'Atheism,' says Leibnitz, 'will

AUGUSTUS STAFFORD.

(From a photograph.)

be the last heresy'"—thus he wrote to John Manners on 18th December 1847. "How often have I thought of this during these times when we see the men of all creeds contriving to damn up religion into as narrow a space as possible! Once the stream of faith flowed in open sunshine, an exalting and abounding river like the Rhine—now it is all to run underground like the pipes of the New River Company. Well, we take different views of this. You are for the conduits; I am still for the Rhine." He was disturbed by neither dreams nor fancies. He opposed to George Smythe's wayward genius a practical intelligence. He had no doubt of anything, save only of George Bentinck's tact and of Disraeli's fitness to lead the Tory party. Nevertheless he held firmly to his faith in Protection after Peel and the Peelites seceded from the party, and was very properly rewarded by office.

Political advancement brought him neither happiness nor success. He was a man of culture and of the world before all things. In society his place was unquestioned and his own. He was the undisputed *arbiter elegantiarum* at Woburn Abbey, and at Lady Jersey's. He was an adept in devising charades, and easily enticed his friends into the snare of private theatricals. He acted with Charles Dickens at Rockingham, and was pronounced by the great man to be "more than passable." He had a quick and mordant wit in talk and upon paper—the rare art of brief and pointed speech, which time seldom spares, and which is appre-

ciated only by the wisest. Disraeli, on 10th March 1842, sends to his wife a good specimen of Stafford O'Brien's wit: "George Beresford, coming into the House"—thus writes Disraeli,—"said to Augustus O'Brien, who was standing at the Bar, 'How did Beresford Hope speak? He's my cousin.' 'My dear fellow,' said O'Brien, 'if he were your own brother he could not have spoken worse.'" [1] In spite of his wit, or on account of it, he was widely popular, and contemporary opinion gives us scarce a hint of dispraise. It is true that Lord Lamington says he was "vain, proud of his talents." And he adds, "Why not?" Should not a man "appreciate his intellectual superiority" as a woman "appreciates her beauty"? And some of Augustus Stafford's gifts were such as were easily discernible by his friends.

He had a neat hand at an epigram.[2] He knew better

[1] See Monypenny's 'Life of Disraeli,' vol. ii. p. 129.

[2] In the mass of verse and prose inspired by the Prince Consort's candidature for the Chancellorship of Cambridge, Augustus Stafford's verses are best worth remembrance. Here they are:—

"Prince Albert on this side, Lord Powis on that,
Have claims than which none can be slighter;
The Prince's consist in inventing a hat,
The Peer's in preserving a mitre.

Then why, ye Collegiate-Heads, do you run
Into all this Senate-house bother?
Can it be that the youth who invented the one
Has a share in dispensing the other?

A Gloss.

Since Albert's refusal is plain to be seen,
Your conduct, O Dons, is unwary:
Do you think that he means what we know you would mean,
If you said, 'Nolo Episcopari'?"

than most how to write the graceful trivial verses which the custom of the time decreed should be written in ladies' albums. When Lady Clementina Villiers and her friends were practising the steps of the minuet before the great ball at Buckingham Palace, Augustus Stafford composed the lines, which are not yet forgotten :—

> "May every hope and every joy
> Combine to make thy lot
> As tranquil as the minuette,
> As gay as the gavotte."

His prayer was not answered. Lady Clementina's untimely death struck sorrow into many faithful hearts, and none mourned her loss more sincerely than Augustus Stafford.

Upon John Manners, Stafford exercised the best influence. He came half-way between Disraeli's practical determination to arrive and the sentimental phantasmagoria which public affairs appeared to be in the eyes of George Smythe. As a counsellor he was wise, staunch, prudent. His faith in John Manners' star never weakened, and he supported him in the days when he had neither seat nor hope with constant loyalty. Thus he won the affection of his friends and the wayward popularity of the House of Commons. Unfortunately, as a politician, though he was consistent, he lacked courage. He had not the strength to appreciate or to stand up to George Bentinck. He approached that brave and sturdy

mastiff, as I have shown, with a certain timidity. He found it difficult, characteristically, to sympathise with his blunt speech and forcible methods. He put his opinion clearly in a letter, addressed to John Manners in 1848 and already quoted. "The reason," said he, "I do not think we ought longer to struggle for Protection to industry is that I believe it not the part of a good citizen ever to struggle hopelessly." However, in the years of opposition which followed the Repeal of the Corn Laws, he distinguished himself both in council and debate, though he was never at his ease with George Bentinck, and gave his confidence to the other leader, Disraeli, only after a long period of hesitation. When Lord Derby framed his Government, Augustus Stafford was appointed Secretary to the Admiralty. The appointment was his undoing. Not long after Lord Derby's Government came into office, rumours were set afloat that there had been irregularities in the management of the dockyards. The rumours were followed by a Select Committee of the House of Commons, which in due course—in May 1853—issued a report. At this distance of time it is as difficult to disengage the political jealousies and animosities which distracted the Admiralty as it is to harmonise the conflicting truth or falsehood of the evidence given by interested witnesses. But here, succinctly, are the facts: on the 27th of February 1847 the Lords of the Admiralty "stated their determination," in a circular, "to introduce and maintain a system

of promotion, under which every man who shall once have entered the services of the dockyards may learn to look to his own exertions as the only means of future advancement." Thus the Board of Admiralty, while it relinquished the patronage of promotions, retained the right of making the first appointments. As a further precaution a circular of 1849 suggested that the reports from the superintendent should be sent direct to the Surveyor, and should then be forwarded by him to the Secretary of the Admiralty. The Minute which approved this circular was not a Board Minute; it was made by the First Lord, and therefore carried less weight than it would have carried had it been made by the Board of Admiralty.

Such was the situation in the dockyards when Augustus Stafford was appointed Secretary. No sooner had he entered on his duties than he heard on every side that appointments and promotions were being dispensed among political opponents. Instantly pressure was put upon him to redress the balance by his political colleagues, who were not unnaturally reluctant to leave all the patronage in the hands of the other side. Yielding finally to pressure, Stafford issued a circular on 19th April 1852 cancelling the circular of 1849, and claimed that as the circular was not mentioned in the Board Minute Book, he had authority as Secretary of the Admiralty to revoke it, a claim in which the First Lord acquiesced. The Select Committee, however, was "unable to discover any facts which justify the issue of the circular

of 19th April 1852, and the evidence proves that this proceeding by Mr Stafford was to satisfy his political friends." At the same time, it was not denied that Stafford appeared to have followed the recommendations of the superintendents, and the heaviest charge against him was that "the suspicion remained, and had a bad effect upon the dockyards." [1]

That the whole truth came out at the inquiry is improbable. What is evident is that Stafford and Sir B. Baker were as fiercely at loggerheads as were the testimonies which they gave before the Committee. Disraeli did his best by pointing out the difficulties of his friend, who on the Board of Admiralty "was placed in the position of mainly considering the House of Commons without any one to support him," and was, in fact, the sole civilian at an inharmonious Admiralty. In the end the whole blame fell upon Stafford, who could follow no other course than the course of resignation. For him, indeed, it was the end of a useful career in politics. Greville, of course, was guilty of Whiggish exaggeration when he talked of "exposures of the most disgraceful

[1] The other charges, that Stafford had visited the dockyards accompanied by the Parliamentary candidates of his own political party—of what other party than his own should he accompany the candidates?—and that he asked "those who were the most prominent parties in electioneering tactics in these boroughs (Plymouth and Devonport) to dine with him a few days previous to the election," were not very serious in themselves, were advanced merely to create prejudice, and were regretfully acknowledged by Stafford himself. They deserve no more than a passing notice.

kind, which are enormously damaging not only to Augustus Stafford himself, but to Lord Derby and his Government." Nor does his comment that "this affair has done great harm to them as a party, and seemed to make them more odious and contemptible than they were before," throw light on anything else than on his own prejudice. But if such was the light in which the Whigs looked upon the Committee's report, it is easy to measure the effect which the disaster had upon a man of Stafford's gay spirit. It put him out of humour with life, and when the war came in the Crimea, he found comfort in going out to Scutari, and doing what he could, which indeed was a vast deal, to alleviate the sufferings of our soldiers. The letters which he wrote to John Manners from the Crimea reveal, as such letters are wont to reveal, the British Army's complete lack of organisation.[1] Thus, by the willing service which he rendered to our soldiers, Stafford effaced a bitter memory, and when he died, he died not the victim of a political scandal, but the hero of Scutari. The months which he had spent in Lord Derby's Government were the one dark interlude in a gallant and gracious career. If he erred then, he erred not from wickedness, but from inexperience; and though his incursion into politics involved him in unhappiness, though, when it came,

[1] Two letters, written by Augustus Stafford to Lord John Manners from the Crimea, possess considerable interest as historical documents, and are printed in the Appendix.

his death seemed not an event of public interest, he lived still in the hearts of his friends, whose bitter regret was enhanced by the thought that a wiser physician might have made him whole.

George Smythe was a friend of another kind—a friend who moved naturally in an atmosphere of tragedy or melodrama. He had a gift of intimacy beyond his fellows, of an intimacy which could never be tranquil. He was the type and exemplar of the ἑαυτον τιμωρούμενος, the Self-Tormentor, and he succumbed the more readily to this torment of self, because his changing temper allowed him to laugh at his own misfortunes. Through many years of persistent ill-luck he preserved a habit of piteous confession, and then went on his way again joyous and unrepentant. He was always two men, and though at times he was insistent to prove that both the two were right, his championship of neither of them was carried to excess. The devoted friend of Lord John Manners and of Disraeli, he showed to each of them a separate face, a separate character. He sat for Coningsby, and for Fakredeen, whose panegyric of debt might well have been pronounced by Smythe himself. Nor did Disraeli, in drawing him also as Waldershare in 'Endymion,' do him any injustice. "Waldershare," says Disraeli, "was profligate, but sentimental; unprincipled, but romantic; the child of whims and the slave of the imagination, so freakish and deceptive that it was always impossible to foretell his course. He was alike capable of sacrificing

all his feelings to worldly considerations or of forfeiting the world for a visionary caprice." Caprice always got the better of him at the end, and even when he made a pretence of worldly consideration, his fancy won an easy victory over a momentary prudence.

The paths of life should have been made smooth for him, and they were rough with adversity. His remarkable qualities of heart and brain could not flourish in an atmosphere of penury. He always thought himself that he was better worth backing than any other man of his time, and he was not backed. His father, Lord Strangford, who might have indulged his ambition in the triumph of his son, was intent to buy back the acres which his ancestors had lost. He wished also that his son should inherit this thankless task. What could the poet, wit, and adventurer, that was George Smythe, have to say to such an enterprise? He was ever far too keenly interested in the life about him, too avid of the momentary sensation, to wish to establish the declining fortunes of his family upon a firm foundation. Nevertheless, it was to this end that his education must be directed. He was sent early from Eton and placed in the fostering care of Julius Hare, one of the "Guessers at Truth," and a scholar determined to do the best he could for his promising if wayward pupil. To read the letters which George Smythe wrote to his father from Hurstmonceaux is to understand how harshly his boyhood, if indeed he may be said to have had a boyhood, was cut short. Brought

up among those older than himself, he writes to his father as to an equal in age. At fifteen he is ready to discuss Thucydides or Landor with the best of them. Like many boys of a violent temperament and a scholarly habit of mind, he was in his youth something of a prig, though before very long he had atoned abundantly for the fault. When his father told him that he had got him an invitation to a ball, he wrote to him in terms of an admirable irony. "That ball," said he, "would assuredly be a great pleasure to me (who cannot dance); but the new Easter pantomime, oh! that would be bliss indeed. But how could you forget the industrious fleas? Nay, my dear father, you must really have thought you were writing to Percy, and not to one who converses daily with Pericles and Brasidas, who reads in the past the history of the future, and also is really rather too old to be dazzled by, or care for, smart white gloves and white waistcoats and music for supper!" Presently he grew young enough for these frivolities. Standing on the threshold of Cambridge, he seemed very very old.

No sooner was the prospect of Cambridge discussed than the duel began between father and son which ended only with the father's death. Though there was deep affection on either side, there was little understanding on the father's. Lord Strangford took a vast pride in his son, as who would not in such a son? He distrusted him always, and he in the end justified the distrust. In the son's heart there mingled

self-pity and self-confidence. The passion of anger was not strong enough in him to save him from admitting his sins and pleading for mercy. A letter written to his father in 1843, some years after he had left Cambridge, is characteristic of his attitude. "Lord L. tells me," says he, "you are again very angry with me, but if you knew how ill and in what dejection I have been, I do not think you would willingly do anything to weaken or disturb my not very strong hold upon life." He had gone to Cambridge, in spite of his father's reluctance and admonition, with his head high and in resolute hope. "I go to Cambridge," he wrote, "having thought long; I go there armed with that desire for distinction which I believe I do not share less than other men; by a love for many of those studies which, if I plunged in dissipation, must necessarily be abandoned; armed with experience and the foreknowledge that the first step lost is all lost—by a belief that the first step boldly made and rightly made is more than half gained." He did at Cambridge pretty much what his fellows did. He distinguished himself at the Athenæum as well as at the Union. His wit and cleverness were famous throughout the University, and, as has been said, he earned an hour's wonder by challenging a fellow-undergraduate to a duel.[1] In brief, he got all

[1] To this method of settling disputes he was constant throughout his life. He was presently prevented from fighting a duel with Roebuck by being bound over to keep the peace. He did meet Romilly at Weybridge, in the last duel fought on English soil.

the good there was to be got out of Cambridge, except academic honours; and if he failed to do justice to his classical attainments, it was because he could not climb over the barrier of mathematics, set as an obstacle in the path of candidates for the Classical Tripos.

His father looked upon him still as a failure, and though he helped him to achieve his first success in politics, he continued to find fault with him and his associations. Especially he deplored his friendship with Disraeli, and in a moment of weakness, George Smythe would have renounced his comrade had he not remembered how deeply he was obliged to him. The part which he played in the politics of his time, after an initial breakdown by no means undistinguished, has been already sketched in these pages. His career as a fortune-hunter was less happy. To marry well was always held before him as a duty by his father—a duty which he was too much of cynic and sentimentalist combined ever to achieve. There remains a letter, written in dejection at Venice, which is at once an apologia for and a condemnation of his whole life. He was but seven-and-twenty when he wrote it, and it is certainly an amazing document. Completely detached from himself, gifted with the intelligence which allows him to survey his own actions without prejudice or excuse, George Smythe sketches his own character and his own career for the benefit (or to the regret) of his father. He describes himself as a sort of cross between Churchill and

Chatterton, and wonders what system may be found out of purposes abandoned, promises broken, and good resolutions unfulfilled. In a few lines he makes clear the difficult relationship in which he stands towards his father. "Society is so artificial in our days," he says, "that it is difficult for a son to write frankly and as he feels, without abating something of the respect he ought always to preserve. Thus although my feelings are really good, although, whatever you may think, I love you dearly as a father, and would obey you as the head of my ruined family; yet we are both men of the world, both members of the same club, both by the fiction of old associations equal; and in discussing matters of society, the only means I see of restoring our house, I am obliged to use a sort of slang to express myself." And what can his father do except "try to put up with one who, despite all these embarrassments and devilries, would not change you against any other father in London, were he as rich as the Fuggers of the past and all the Rothschilds of the present?"

Then, having praised his father, he fully admits his own faults. He has been extravagant, selfish, reckless. He has put his father in difficulties: he is head over ears in debt. Though this is much to be deplored, it is not the whole story, and with great confidence he invites his father to look a little at his *per contra*. Thus he puts the case for himself. "Peel and Graham in full Parliament, and the more flatteringly that I have ever kept aloof from them, prophesy my emi-

nence. Macaulay, very sparing of praise, the first of European critics, wrote a letter to be shown me, full of encouragement and eulogism. Rogers, the first of living poets, has honoured me with his friendship, and always speaks well of me. Were I to die to-morrow, I should occupy three lines in a Biographical Dictionary as a might-have-been." He admits that his father has paid for this social distinction, and has no doubt that it was worth what it cost. He insists rightly and clamorously that there must be some good in him. "The most virtuous and amiable of my contemporaries," he pleads, "are my friends. J. Manners is my bosom friend—the most virtuous of men. Lyttleton gave me a copy of his works, and (though I voted against him) is sorry, not angry. Faber, a man who gives up all he has in the world for conscience; Whytehead, who died a missionary in New Zealand—all these men love or loved me."

A noble array, truly, and it did not satisfy Lord Strangford. To his son's *per contra* he replied that he had not "brought an ounce of honey to the hive." How should he bring honey to the hive who was a poet without a poet's austerity, a man of the world who was too deeply in love with life to control it? In this he knew he had failed. "If you would enjoy life," he had written in his commonplace book, "you must sip it," and he had drunk it at a draught. In the one enterprise which seemed not beyond his compass—the pursuit of heiresses—he had had no success. And he had humiliated himself sufficiently:

he had even sent out his servant to look for a suitable quarry. What could he do? He could write, but he had never endured the discipline of a man of letters; and though he aimed at literature, he brought down journalism. The one book which he published, 'Historic Fancies,' has enough fancy in it and enough history in it to make a dozen volumes, and it lacks the tight hand upon it, which might have given it shape and form. His posthumous novel, 'Angela Pisani'—a remarkable book for a young man to have written,—has something in it of Stendhal, and a movement and imagination all its own. Yet he achieved the triumph of his life as a contributor to 'The Morning Chronicle,' in which he wrote the articles on foreign affairs—a subject he had mastered by much reading and many journeys; and in the end he was accounted a failure.

A failure perhaps he was in the ordinary sense. He had brought no honey to the hive. He had played no great part in politics. The wonderful fascination of his talk, the charm to which all who knew him surrendered, lingered in the memory of his friends. His wit either sparkled in the works of others or was forgotten. The jest about the dinner, at which all was cold except the ices, may be found in a novel of Disraeli's, and is reputed his. Assuredly he had great skill in epigram, and a few specimens of this skill survive in an old note-book. "Our hereditary aristocracy," he wrote in a moment of Jacobinism —"the pale ghosts of departed criminals." More

nearly he hit the mark with "Respectability is the providence of footmen." If he had an intermittent contempt for rank, of genius he was always a humble worshipper. "Men of genius," said he, "are God Almighty's spies." And in another passage, inspired no doubt by Swift, he thus expressed his faith: "If men of genius, instead of fencing like posture-makers, or stalking one another like *sicarii*, would only form into 'a sacred band,' what could stand against them?" A wayward enchanting figure, whose "failure," as he himself called it, is best explained in two lines of his own:—

"What is it, Life?—a little strife, where victories are vain,
Where those who conquer do not win, nor those receive who gain."

It was one of his father's grievances that George Smythe was the victim of "Liberal opinions." Unstable as the wind, he could not be held nor chained. He was not long constant to creed or party. To remove his father's misapprehension, "I have no opinions," he wrote in 1840; "I am one of those miserable eclectics, born since 1815, who believe in all things, who see the virtues of Absolutism, Autocracy, Democracy without a preference, who think the Tories quite as right as the Whigs, the Catholics as the Protestants, the Buddhists as the Christians, the Atheists as the Theists, the Spinozans as the Cartesians. Thus in politics I have had only one idea—what opinion is likely to turn up trumps? and to

that I have attached myself with the instinct of a Hawkwood or Dalgetty." That is true enough, though the cynicism is exaggerated, and it explains why he was rather a writer of politics than a politician. And his insight into politics is sometimes astonishing. "A middle class," he confided to a note-book, "must make up its mind for one of two things—to support an upper class or a lower class; and the former is the cheaper of the two." Cynic though he was, he delighted, if the mood suited him, in amiability. "We (Disraeli, myself, Kennard) met Tom Moore this evening, 30th May 1844"—I quote from one of his note-books,—"in Piccadilly at half-past twelve, walking; and as we were all merry, or melancholy with enthusiasm, we began with one impulse to cheer him. He just shifted his collar and looked round happily at us. We gave him a pleasant dream." A kindly act, and worthy remembrance. So he lived his life in reckless abandonment to the whim of the hour, and wore himself out before he was forty. From his father he concealed very little; from Disraeli nothing; and for tragic cynicism it would be difficult to surpass the last letters which he wrote to his old chief and comrade. Beset by disease, pursued even to the death by women who loved him, he describes himself to Disraeli in September 1857 as "a bed-ridden Lovelace." When Disraeli asks him for his symptoms, he talks about the mysteries of the reciprocal action of physicks and psychology, and confesses that he is sustained in life only by his

nervous system, which is what has also killed him. "I have no stamina," says he, "my legs and arms are not larger than slate-pencils." And then he asks his friend: "Will you give me to November?" He read the date accurately enough. He was married on his death-bed, wondering whether it was to be a "wedding feast or funeral baked meats," and on 9th November he died.

However he appeared to others, for John Manners he was always a knight-errant of the loftiest sentiments. The vision which John Manners had had of his friend in his youth remained fresh and untarnished, and Smythe's delicacy had concealed from his earliest and closest companion much of the truth. There was no insincerity in this concealment, for, as I have said, Smythe was not one but many. The letter from Smythe which Lord John had kept in the packet labelled "Sorrow and Death" is proof of his firm faith in his friend. It was written, 13th June 1854, in grief after the death of his sister, Philippa, and is full of regret for the past and his own unworthiness. He confesses and deplores his loss of faith. "Ellen (his younger sister) once said to me not long ago before her death," thus he writes, "'George, you will never be religious again?' And I asked 'Why?' 'Because you have known the truth, felt it, and rejected it.' Curious is life! Thus the school of Voltaire in youth and manhood may lead to faith; but the school of Faith leads without discipline to Death without belief." And in the hour of death and sorrow he turned

naturally to John Manners. "You are the only link now with the past which seems likely to chain on to the future. Separate or hostile as our destinies may be in that future, we have known a friendship together which has far passed that of ordinary comrades. . . . Yet, diverse as our courses have been, and far asunder and remote as the world would believe our respective selves, *intus*, in ourselves I shall feel that we have that in common which they can never understand. Wherein lies our sympathy? Is it only in accident —that of old companionship? Haply. For you are gentle, good, most tolerant, most persevering, courageous as a Norse king, ever ready, never baffled; going on and on and on, yet farther, and yet higher, and never making an enemy, in despite of triumphs unparalleled in our age, at your age. And I am just the reverse of all this. For I hardly open my lips but to make an enemy. I am very lazy also, and so susceptible as to shut up like a beaten hound. Yet I would fain think that our sympathy lies in our love of truth."

Such was the letter which Lord John chose to represent what he knew and thought of George Smythe. Nothing censorious on either side ever separated them. Lord John remembered of his friend only what was gay and witty. "Memory," he wrote to Lyttelton, "overlooks the last few years, and settles upon those joyous days at Cambridge, when he was the sun and centre of my happiness, and when we never tired of auguring for him a dazzling career of glory." Whoever

sang the praise of Smythe hereafter was Lord John's friend. Never did he waver for an instant in loyalty to a treasured memory. When, in 1870, Disraeli wrote with admiration of Smythe—in the preface to 'Lothair'—as one of those who met and talked at Deepdene, "I was much touched," wrote Lord John, "by the reference to dear G. S. S. in your preface, which is a striking vindication of what I and some others know to be the consistency of your political writings and speeches." And in George Smythe's grave Lord John buried something more than an old and tried friendship. He buried also much of the romance which, in a romantic age, he cherished more fervently than any of his fellows. Never again would he receive such letters as only George Smythe could write him, breathing of the past and of baffled hopes. Henceforth his feet were set securely upon the stormy road of politics, where the journey seemed all the rougher, because no longer was Stafford's wit or Smythe's sympathy there to smooth it.

CHAPTER XI.

REFORM.

THE one strand in the tangled skein of politics which kept its dim and separate colour in 1857-58 was the strand which represented Mr Gladstone. What were his opinions? where was his allegiance? That others should have a clear perception of what he wanted and hoped was impossible, for he had no clear perception himself. When Derby called him "a half-regained Eurydice," he turned the lamp of wit upon the plain surface of the truth. A long and persistent attempt was made to regain Mr Gladstone, but Eurydice would not make up her mind whether she wished to be rescued or not. Though she did not like her companions, she was never quite sure that she would not find it more profitable to stay where she was. John Manners had stood with Gladstone for Newark in 1843, and their friendship was old and well-established. In ecclesiastical matters, where Gladstone's views were more or less clearly defined, there was a certain sympathy between the two men; and though Gladstone's inability to make a plain statement had long

been notorious, the settlement of Free Trade seemed to leave little in debate between the Peelites and Tories. John Manners had an early prescience of the course of events, and before the General Election of 1857, he addressed a paper to Disraeli on the present aspect of affairs, which he thought expressed the views of many of their friends. He assumed at the outset that there was a general wish on both sides that the old Tory or Conservative Party should be reorganised, and he made a reasoned attempt to discover the obstacles which lay in the way—obstacles of principle and personal obstacles. As to the obstacles of principle, he declared with perfect truth that they were no longer of any effect. "The causes of original dissension," he wrote, "are now removed, and removed in favour of the policy of the Minority. They may be roughly summed up as Corn Laws, Sugar Duties, Navigation Laws, followed by Clergy Reserves, Succession Tax. There is no intention on the part of the Majority to reopen any of these questions; therefore the Minority would rejoin the Main Body not as suppliants or penitents, but with colours flying as in the past."

From this it is clear that the Peelites had no surviving grievance against their ancient colleagues. They suffered chiefly from a natural inability to make up their minds. They were reluctant, by returning to their friends, to sacrifice what seemed to them a position of leadership. John Manners, resolved upon an exact analysis, pursued his inquiry

to the end. Having dismissed the past, he asked, "What are the actual or apprehended causes of disunion under the head of principles?" And he found them, quite justly, in the field of finance. The Majority was in favour of Custom House Duties; the Minority thought itself pledged to Direct Taxation and Excise. In other words, he said "Mr Gladstone would probably repeal more Custom House Duties, and *pro tanto* rivet the Excise on the country; indeed, unless he can effect great reductions in the expenditure, it would mean that he must increase either the Excise or the Income Tax." So much for the Minority. The Majority, as John Manners thought, was reluctant to cut down estimates, unless they were proved to be excessive, and he feared that if an attempt were made to force it to an unwelcome course, "the heart and pith of our Party" would be driven to opposition. Here it seemed there should be room for some give and take. "Ought not Mr Gladstone," asked Lord John, "looking at the enormous concessions made to his Party since 1846, to rest content with them, and accept the Financial *status quo* with an understanding that the next relief of taxation shall be in accordance with the views of the Majority?"

Of one thing he was convinced: that the Country Party could not be brought to join in a crusade against the Custom House and liberal military establishments, and therewith he urged his colleagues to remember the great political truth: "It is easy to alienate your friends, impossible to conciliate your

opponents." A forgetfulness of this simple adage has broken many a political bargain, has destroyed many a boastful coalition. For the rest, John Manners saw no difference either at home or abroad which should prevent his policy of reunion. But he was far too wise to underrate the present obstacles. The first of these, in his own words, was "the general dislike and mistrust of Mr Gladstone's political career, which was felt, no doubt, by many of the Majority; but these feelings, unreasonable in themselves, . . . may be expected to disappear with their cause." The second obstacle was more formidable: "clashing of conflicting claims," in John Manners' words. "These must be left to the Leaders of the two sections to conciliate as best they can; and they have a right to expect and to demand that no selfish considerations of that nature should be allowed to prejudice what this memorandum starts with assuming to be the general wish, as it is the undoubted interest, of both sections of the Party to see effected."

The memorandum is wise and practical. It failed of its effect because it overlooked the third and greatest obstacle of all—Mr Gladstone's temper and temperament. It may be that that tortuous dialectician found it impossible to make up his mind. It may be that he saw his best chance of leadership in adherence to the Liberal Party. Palmerston was old, and could not be expected much longer to incur Mr Gladstone's disapproval and distrust. With him out of the way, there was no rival on that side to challenge

Mr Gladstone's supremacy. Moreover, Mr Gladstone had begun to feel the irresistible charm of vast crowds and marble columns. He knew that he would more easily gratify the craving that he had for those things if he cast off his old allegiance to the Tory Party, and already he was in mind and in heart an earnest, if unavowed, Radical. If, on the other hand, he remained constant to the faith which once he held, he must fight for his place in the party against Disraeli, always a redoubtable antagonist. So for two years the uncertain contest was waged. The Tories wooed Mr Gladstone as no politician had ever been wooed before. It must indeed have been flattering to his vanity, especially as it was always for him to accept or reject the pleasant overtures. He resisted the famous appeal of Disraeli, which no one can read without being impressed by its magnanimous sincerity, in such terms of harshness as even Lord Morley deplores. "None of us, I believe," writes the eminent biographer, "were ever able to persuade Mr Gladstone to do justice to Disraeli's novels. . . . In the comparative stiffness of Mr Gladstone's reply on this occasion, I seem to hear the same accents of guarded reprobation."

In guarded reprobation, then, Mr Gladstone declined the office which Lord Derby offered to him, and a year later became Chancellor of the Exchequer in Palmerston's Cabinet. The mingled fear and contempt in which he had long held his new chief vanished in the twinkling of an eye. All the wooing of the Conservatives had been done in vain. In vain had

John Manners analysed the differences which lay between the old Tories and the Peelites. Gladstone, having clung for an hour to all the opinions, at last took the irrevocable step, and left his friends wondering. When he at last definitely declined to join Lord Derby, John Manners wrote a line of sorrow to Lyttelton. "Gladstone has refused to join Derby," said he. "I do not understand the grounds of Gladstone's refusal, and greatly regret it." Lyttelton was equally in the dark. "I have heard nothing, and do not know why Gladstone has resigned," thus he replied on February 23rd 1858; "I rather expected he would accept, and really hardly know on what points he disagrees. I almost suspect he may have stood out for an alteration in the Divorce Act, which Lord Derby might demur to." If these two old and intimate friends had no inkling of Gladstone's motives, who should have understood them? But at least John Manners had nothing to blame himself with. He had done his best for the cause of reconciliation, and if he had failed to patch up the ancient quarrel the fault was not his.

The political history of the nineteenth century has been the history of what is called by a strange irony Parliamentary Reform. Since it was resolved in 1832 to destroy that which Mr Gladstone described as a "perfect constitution," the two parties in the State have vied with one another in adding new battalions to the great army of voters. At the outset the democratic principle was disclaimed by both sides. For a while

Tory and Whig alike kept up a pretence that what they wanted was to secure a fair representation of all classes. They shrank from creating any one class the supreme tyrant of England. Although they did not see as clearly as they should that an extended franchise, by making a despot, was the negation of freedom, they still deceived themselves that they had set up a rigid barrier against democracy. And every step they took carried them farther away from the decent hope of giving each class its due weight in the commonwealth. The Reform Bill of 1832 caused a revolution, because it introduced the new principle. It made the middle-class supreme in the country, and thus established the Whigs, as the Whigs themselves hoped and believed, tenants for life. A £10 rental in the boroughs and a £50 tenancy in the country seemed to Lord John Russell and his friends sufficient for their purpose. They talked glibly of finality, and assured the country that no other measure of reform need ever be passed. A skilful agitation in the Press and elsewhere aroused and sustained a wild excitement. "A universal bellow," said Greville, "pervades this country for what they call reform without knowing what it is." So little did they know what it was that they were sure that it would fill their pockets, and Greville thought the people would be very much disappointed when the Bill was passed, because their imaginations were raised to the highest pitch, and, after all, they would get nothing out of it.

The Bill was introduced in March 1831. By August

its "finality" seemed to waver. Lord John Russell confessed that his Bill "would not be final if it was not found to work as well as the people desired." But he made the "people" masters of the country, and renounced the old and better theory of constitutional representation. For many months the agitation continued, though, as Greville said, the world was heartily sick of it. There were many goings and comings between the parties: the question, whether or not peers should be made, was asked in fury and answered with disdain. When the Lords threw out the Bill, all the papers, save two, were rimmed with black. No sooner was it passed than it was quietly accepted, and the life of the country went on as though nothing had happened, and finality may be said to have died of old age in 1852. For in that year the agitation began again, and went on briskly, with hardly a break, until 1867. But by a political paradox the movement for reform was never a popular movement. After 1832 the rapture of the mob was never reawakened, and it seemed as though the politicians fought one another before a crowd of indifferent citizens, who cared very little for the privileges which their patrons proposed to confer upon them. Perhaps the discussion of the franchise kept them out of worse mischief.

In 1859 Lord Derby's Government brought in a Reform Bill which it believed would satisfy the country, and avoid the risk which any Bill of the Radicals' devising would ensure. John Manners,

Disraeli's staunch lieutenant, came early into the field. The measure was being actively discussed by the Cabinet in November 1858, and John Manners hastened to bring solace to his anxious brother. "We are hard at work every day," he wrote to Granby, now the Duke of Rutland, "at Reform and Finance. Your recommendation to leave the former alone comes too late. This is a favourable moment for settling that question for this generation, and Bright's violence and his promised Bill will probably assist us to carry a less sweeping measure." Thus are politicians too often persuaded to give by instalments what they fear may be thrust upon them whole. At any rate, Lord Derby's Government would not act recklessly. "You may be assured," Lord John told his brother on 6th December 1858, "that whatever is finally proposed as our measure will have been arranged with the greatest care and deliberation and upon full information." As the weeks passed, his confidence increased, and he thought that even his brother, uncompromising Tory though he was, would not be displeased. "The announcement of the Reform Bill," wrote Lord John the day before Disraeli introduced it, "is to be to-morrow. I may venture to relieve your anxiety so far as to say that the Borough Franchise is not to be lowered at all, and that if your friends will regard the scheme as a comprehensive whole, I think they ought to be generally satisfied with it."

In truth, they ought to have been satisfied with

it. The Bill was innocuous in itself, though it may be doubted whether, had it passed, it would have been accepted by the other side as a settlement of the question. It did not begin the fatal competition in a lowered borough franchise. It extended the franchise laterally and vertically. The occupation franchise in the counties was reduced to £10, and this brought it into harmony with the franchise which obtained in the borough. And then to give that variety to the voters in which Disraeli always believed, votes were granted to those who possessed £10 a year from the Funds, or £60 in the Savings Bank, to graduates at the University, lawyers, doctors, and other deserving persons. When Disraeli described it as a Conservative measure, he told no more than the truth. Its conservatism was probably its undoing. Though it aroused no hostility in the country, it aroused little interest. Indeed, Reform, as I have said, was a game that was played only in Parliament, and not even the violence of Bright could make it strike a spark of enthusiasm in the constituencies. Greville, comparing its effect with all the busy agitation of 1832, was amazed at the contrast. "Then the interest was intense," says he, "the whole country in a fever of excitement, the Press rabid, the clamour for Reform all but universal, party feeling running tremendously high. In this condition of the public mind and of politics the debates began and continued. This debate has begun, and seems likely to continue, how differently!"

John Manners was of Greville's opinion. The debate was languid, he told his brother, and the members could not make up their minds. "Our country members," thus he wrote to the Duke of Rutland on 10th March 1859, "who a fortnight ago were so well pleased with the transference of the borough freeholders, now say that they cannot meet their constituents with that principle on their banners, and are petitioning Lord Derby to withdraw or modify it." Nobody seemed to know whether the Bill would pass or be thrown out. John Manners disliked the appearance of things, and thought, rightly enough, that "moderate men ought to wish the Reform question to be settled with as little delay as possible," as he said in a letter to his brother, dated 17th March 1859; "for it is clear that the longer the question is left open, the more sweeping will the changes ultimately be. Bright sees this clearly, and avows that he is in no hurry to pass a Bill this year or next." Lord John Russell, who in the matter of Reform pretended to be a moderate, and Palmerston, who was bitterly opposed to Reform of any kind, saw it clearly also. They saw clearly, too, that opposition to the Bill, which could not be successful, would bring them back into office, and after a brief hesitation they decided to throw the Bill out. "Only two of our party voted in the majority," wrote John Manners to his brother. "The result is extremely creditable and satisfactory to the Government, 265 men of our party voting for us. The remainder of

our division consisted of 10 English Liberals and 70 Irish. We did not expect Lord John Russell and the Coalition would bring quite so many into the field. But I never doubted as to the result. Lord Derby is now with the Queen."

The discussion of Reform in 1859 achieved one purpose only: it proved that Reform would not henceforth be the exclusive hobby of the Radical Party. Had the Tories been condemned by a persistent opposition to any change in the franchise, they would have ceased to exist as a separate party. It was no mere policy of dishing the Whigs which Derby and Disraeli supported. It was plain to all that within the limits of Reform there was ample scope for Tory as for Liberal measures. In 1859 the Tories hoped by their Bill to check the onrush of democracy. As Disraeli said: "You want in this House every element that obtains the respect and enjoys the interest of the country." He and his followers were convinced that if you established a democracy, you must in due season reap the fruits of democracy; and if the country manifested little enthusiasm for the business, the politicians persisted in the discussion, though the difference between one side and another was not very great.

No sooner was the result of the General Election plain than John Manners sent to Disraeli a Memorandum on Reform. He protested against the policy of forestalling the Whigs, though he admitted the necessity of deciding at once whether they should

introduce a Reform Bill into the House of Commons in the middle of June or not. "The reason, indeed the only reason, assigned in favour of that course," he wrote to Disraeli, "is that if we do not introduce such a measure, Lord John Russell will either do so, or move a vote of censure on us. . . . In reality, then, it is proposed to introduce a Reform Bill, not for its own sake, nor because we approve of its provisions or hope to pass it, but as a means of checkmating Lord John Russell."

It was natural that he should have thought this neither a right nor a wise course to take. "Can we avow it to our supporters, many of whom will require explanations to be given for the unexpected and (as they will think) unnecessary introduction of a Reform Bill this summer?" Whether Lord John Russell proceeded by vote of censure, or by Bill, John Manners thought the answer of the Tories should be definite and the same. Thus he framed it: "We adhere to the necessity of Reform; we intend to introduce a Bill at the commencement of next Session, the state of domestic and foreign affairs rendering it inexpedient, if not impossible, for us to introduce one now with the hope of carrying it this year: if therefore you have confidence in us, reject this vote or this Bill as the case may be, and enable us to put the national defences on a safe and satisfactory footing." Whatever happened, thought John Manners, the Tories would be left in a strong position. If the House supported them they would have time to pre-

pare a well-considered measure. If the House supported Lord John Russell, "it is better," said he, "to be destroyed by our opponents than, by attempting to propitiate them, to alienate any considerable section of our friends." Had Lord Derby's Government survived, this prudent advice would no doubt have been taken. But in June 1859 the Government was beaten, and Lord Palmerston once more became Prime Minister of England.

And the wearisome debate on Reform continued. That it should have been continued proved in the politicians a sad lack of fertility and invention. Lord John Russell's new Reform Bill, which reduced the qualification in the boroughs to £6 and introduced a £10 occupation franchise in the counties, fell dead in the House, and was presently carried out, unwept and unmourned. Mr Gladstone in 1866 had no better fortune. He proposed a £7 franchise for boroughs and a £14 franchise for counties. With the help of Mr Lowe and his fellow Adullamites this Bill too was thrown out.

Throughout these years of controversy John Manners eagerly supported Disraeli. In a Memorandum on Reform, written in May 1866, he sketched a course which might "hold the Conservative Party together, and lead, either to the passing of a safe measure, or—without damaging our position out-of-doors—to the ultimate rejection of the Government Bill." With all the skill of a Parliamentary tactician, he devised a plan which should at once

strengthen the party and save the country from what he thought an imminent danger. "A mere substitution," said he, "of £8 for £7 or £20 for £14 would be regarded by the country, and rightly, as a concession made by the Government to their more moderate supporters, and the Bill would still be the Government Bill, conferring, if passed, all the prestige of passing it on the Government and the Liberal Party." That, indeed, as we look at the controversy from this distance of time, seemed to be the purpose of either side, to win for themselves the glory of passing the Bill. "But if the leaders of the Conservative Party propose in Committee," thus went on John Manners, "a series of amendments amounting to a different measure, it is submitted that in any event the position of the party must be greatly improved. If the amendments are carried, the measure, in the eyes of the country, is ours and not the Government's. If they, or even a portion of them, are rejected, we then are justified in opposing the third reading of the Bill, and are able to throw back on our opponents the charge of rejecting a moderate measure of Reform." Among other suggestions he made these: the substitution of £6 rental for £7 rental in boroughs, substitution of £20 for £14 in counties, and retention of rate-paying sections of Reform Act. These were, in fact, the proposals embodied in the ill-fated "Ten Minutes" Bill of February 1867. But as I have said, Mr Gladstone's Bill was thrown out, and the Tories came in, resolved to get

rid of the bugbear of Reform once and for always. How this end was achieved is told in the story of Disraeli's first great triumph.

"Reform agitation," said John Bright in December 1860, "in the great towns will be so violent this winter as to compel the Government to bring in a Bill." John Bright's prophecy was falsified, and not until 1866 did the leaders of the Reform Party outside the House succeed in stirring up their followers to revolt. On 23rd July in that year the Committee of the Reform League was amiable enough to announce that a meeting would be held in Hyde Park, a place reserved for the solace of the people, not of a faction, to demand the extension of the Parliamentary Franchise. The authorities, very properly resenting that a park dedicated to the pleasure of all should be seized upon by a noisy few whose ambition it was to do as they liked, determined to close the gates. The Government, having taken a just decision, did not provide a force sufficient to carry it out, and after many inflammatory speeches had been delivered outside the Park, demanding increased suffrage and the ballot, and declaring that "the question must be answered whether the parks were the property of the Crown or of the people who paid for them," as though Mr Beales and his friends were the whole and indivisible people, the mob marched in procession to the Park. There the mob found the gates of the Park closed, and proceeded, after the manner of mobs, to tear down the railings, and to trample upon the Park.

Thus they proved that, if they were not to have the exclusive use of it, it should have no amenity for anybody else. Thereupon Mr Beales, having vindicated his "right," marched on to Trafalgar Square, and from the base of the Nelson Column denounced Sir Richard Mayne and the Home Secretary.

The following day Lord John Manners came upon the scene, because, as First Commissioner of Works, he had charge of the public parks. The account which he confided to his journal of the mob and its consequences has the merit of being vivid, authentic, and at first hand. "On reaching office," he writes on Monday, 22nd July, "I found George Russell very angry at placards which had been put up at Hyde Park, signed R. Mayne, forbidding Reform Meeting, without any reference to us. It turned out, however, that Walpole had authorised the step without consulting the Cabinet. A great riot ensued; the gates of the Park being closed, the leaders moved off, the mob stormed the railings, broke into the Park, and got the better of the Police. The military, when called out, restored order, but the Park that night, Tuesday night, and Wednesday afternoon was wrecked. On Tuesday afternoon, at Walpole's request, I met him at the Home Office, and on my suggestion the Duke of Cambridge joined us. I represented strongly that the work of violence was then going on, that the Police were physically and morally, after the events of the previous night, *hors de combat*, and that a

Cavalry Regiment ought to be sent at once into the Park.

"They discussed and talked, until at last, putting my hands on my knees and turning to the Commander-in-Chief, I said, 'Sir, while we are talking here heads are being broken and property destroyed,' upon which he agreed to send a regiment of Life Guards into the Park. As the evening wore on things became worse, and Mayne, after a severe engagement between the Police and the mob, cleared Park Lane and the Park by charges of Horse and Foot Guards, against whom the mob never thought of making the slightest resistance. In fact, though the Park was quite open, it was successfully defended, and when I arrived at the Piccadilly entrance about 9.30 I found a single line of Foot Guards drawn across the entrance from Apsley House garden to the Lodge, the gates open, the mob, among whom I mingled, close up to the soldiers, exchanging chaff with them, but never venturing or thinking to attack that single line.

"On Wednesday, the 25th, I was asked by Walpole to help him receive a deputation of the Reform League at the Home Office. I went, but had no previous conversation with him. After the spokesmen had addressed him—not one of them expressing any regret for the part they had taken, but throwing all the blame on Government and Police—Walpole replied, but was so much affected that after the second sentence he broke down, and, burying his face in his hands, gave way for a minute or two—a more painful

scene I never witnessed. I had sat, silent and indignant, for more than an hour, while the real authors of the calamities they were affecting to deplore had been addressing the Home Secretary as the culprit. At last he resumed, and in broken sentences and tearful accents agreed to hand over the peace of London to them for that night, stipulating that he should keep police and military in reserve. When they left the room, we—Walpole, Ld. Belmore, Mr Waddington, and I—retired to the window, and I said to W.: 'It seems to me that you have transferred your responsibility to those men who cannot undertake it.' He demurred to this, and then in came Mr Beales and three or four more, who, without sitting down and in a most irregular way, proceeded to ask permission to hold another Reform meeting next Monday. I whispered to W., 'Say you will consider it,' afraid lest he should at once concede it. To this he assented, and told Mr B. that if he would put his request in writing it should receive a written reply."

When the request was put before the Cabinet it was sternly refused, and the Reformers were perforce content with the orchestra in Victoria Park. Thus all the forces were available for Hyde Park, and there was an end of the disturbance. John Manners alone had acted with firmness and decision. As he told his brother, it was not the mob which had frightened him so much as the indecision of some who have to maintain the peace and order of the Metropolis. And

now the strange spectacle presented itself that the leaders of the mob, a few days ago full of threats and courage, were more frightened than those whom they had frightened. For the moment, then, all was well, but the episode had given a new impulse to the general clamour for Reform. Agitation, as usual, had called attention to an assumed grievance, and men, indifferent before, were asking: How shall the problem be tackled? There was unanimity neither in the country nor in the Cabinet as to the method of framing and passing the measure. Almost all were agreed that something should be done, and done quickly. The question, and the ardent controversy which it kindled, seemed suddenly to burn up the energies of country and Government alike.

No attempt was made to distinguish between the agitation and its alleged excuse. Until the fire of Reform was extinguished there seemed little chance of peace or security. At home the wearisome quarrel made a quiet contemplation of any other measure impossible. It hampered the activity of the Cabinet when it looked abroad, where the prospect was ominous. The Queen expressed a strong desire that the matter should be settled by the Tories. On 20th February 1867 Lord Derby opened a discussion of the Cabinet by declaring, as is set down in John Manners' journal, "that the Queen was heart and soul with them, and had made such representations to him that he should feel bound in honour to stand by her to the last, and fight the battle out. He added that her language

went as far as to imply that in her opinion the monarchy itself was at stake in the settlement now, and by them, of the Reform question." In this persistence of the Queen, we may detect the real reason why the Cabinet was determined to make an end of the agitation by yielding to it. The Ministers were unwilling to oppose her, because they were afraid, with good cause, of endangering her health. In July 1867 Dr Jenner made to Lord Derby an alarming statement of the Queen's condition.[1] If, even when the Franchise Bill was no longer in peril, the Queen's health caused serious anxiety, it is plain that Lord Derby and Disraeli, who knew the truth, were desirous in February of ensuring such a settlement as might bring her peace of mind.

For some time before this declaration there had been uncertainty and disagreement. Disraeli and John Manners were opposed at first to an instant reopening of the dispute, and when they were won over to Derby's side they agreed that Lord Derby's plan of proceeding by resolution was to be preferred. The members of the Cabinet were invited, severally, to submit resolutions to the whole body. Besides Derby

[1] Here is the passage taken from Lord John's journal, dated 6th July 1867: "Lord Derby opened with a very alarming statement of the Queen's mental and bodily condition. Dr Jenner had told him that any excitement produces the most severe bilious derangement, which induces vomiting to an incredible extent, and his fear is that if that relief fails the mischief would fly to the head. . . . Jenner has offered to come before the Cabinet to be examined. This confirms what Sir James Clark told me at Windsor at Easter."

and Disraeli, no Minister sent in any resolutions except Lord John, whose preamble and two first resolutions were adopted. The resolutions did little else than discover hostility in the Cabinet. General Peel began by opposing "all extension downward, guarded or unguarded." Lord John pleaded for Household Suffrage and Plurality votes, and believed that, in spite of disagreement, "the Government would succeed and stand." For a moment Peel was persuaded to support Lord Derby's proposals, and then events moved rapidly. As late as 19th February Disraeli still insisted upon his scheme of Household Suffrage, and in Hardy's words, "All was smooth."[1] "The nodus," according to the same authority, "had been untied by no mean hand." But on 23rd February, two days before the resolutions were to be moved, the nodus was tied up again, and nothing was smooth. "The General," wrote John Manners in his journal, "still opposed the whole scheme. On leaving the room, he exclaimed, 'We shall be booted out of office on Monday.'"

Monday brought another surprise. I will let John Manners tell the story in his own words. "I little thought," he wrote in his journal on 26th February, "that Peel's prophecy was so near accomplishment. Yesterday, as soon as I reached my office, a summons came to attend Lord Derby in St James's Square. Ten of my colleagues were already there, silent and depressed. The position was soon explained: early

[1] See 'Gathorne Hardy: A Memoir,' vol. i. p. 199.

that morning Lord Derby had received letters from Lords Cranborne and Carnarvon, saying that in consequence of an examination the former had made of the figures submitted by Disraeli they could not assent to Household Suffrage, guarded by dual voting, and must, if the plan was not abandoned, resign. Lord D. said Cabinet was called to find, if possible, some means of keeping those two important Ministers in office. Then General Peel said, 'It is more than that, for you must add me. I was content, believing myself to stand alone, to waive my own strong objections; but if two of my colleagues share them, I must repeat them.' Carnarvon cut a sorry figure, owning that he had not verified Cranborne's figures, but assuming them to be correct, said he could not support the plan. . . . Stanley said argument was useless: it was now half-past one; the party was summoned for two, and he therefore advised that we should fall back upon £6 for boroughs and £20 for counties. Cranborne now came in with reams of paper in his hand, and was beginning to read his figures, but was stopped and told of Stanley's proposal. Pakington urged him vehemently to give way; and when C. refused, proposed to accept the three resignations—Cranborne, Carnarvon, and Peel—and proceed with the plan. This was overruled. Lord Derby and Disraeli both advised Stanley's course, which was at last, after protests from the Duke of Buckingham, Chelmsford, Hardy, Pakington, Northcote, and myself, adopted, and announced to the party

half an hour afterwards. I forbear comments on the mode and the moment by and at which this vital change was forced on us." So close was the decision run that Derby had to meet the party and explain a Bill which had been formulated but ten minutes before.

After the Ten Minutes Bill had been introduced by Disraeli and been bitterly criticised, Lord John Manners summed up the situation with a wise lucidity: "I have been thinking over the matter as discussed last night," he wrote to Disraeli on 27th February 1867, "and the result of my thought is — that we had better stick to our present craft until she founders in Committee (if she does founder), and then step on board the larger and safer vessel. In other words, precisely reverse our original plan. This will give us one great advantage. We shall hold in our hands a trump card, playing which we can if necessary go to the country, and by retaining which we may adopt a bolder tone in defending the present scheme. Say the Opposition carry a £5 rating. Upon that we may drop the franchise part of the scheme at once, substitute Household Suffrage with the Dual vote for it, and our colleagues, in return for our conduct towards them, and hating the £5 rating without a safeguard at least as much as Household Suffrage with one, must go with us. We can then offer the House our larger scheme and a Dissolution." Thus we see Lord John Manners playing the game of politics with something of his leader's skill, and truly

it cannot be said that his vision of affairs was dim or uncertain. If his plan was not accepted, he watched the passage of Disraeli's Bill through the House with an interested enthusiasm ; he intervened in the debate when it was required of him, and he was as ready to console his leader in moments of difficulty as to welcome his triumph when it came.

Before the Bill was passed, Lord Derby's Cabinet had many an awkward corner to turn. The resignations, proffered and withdrawn, were soon tendered again. The dissident Ministers held their portfolios for less than a week longer. On 2nd March the crisis came. " The most eventful Cabinet I yet remember was Saturday's," thus wrote John Manners in his journal. " Having been detained at the office I was a few minutes late, and on entering found all my colleagues assembled and mute. Lord Derby then commenced in an agitated but firm voice to recapitulate the events of the last week, how he had taken with him to Windsor last Saturday evening, as he thought, the unanimous resolve of the Cabinet, how the Queen approved, and how at half-past eight on Monday morning for the first time he learned by a letter from Cranborne that fatal objections were entertained to it. He then described the unmistakable condemnation of the poor and miserable *pis aller* adopted under pressure at the last moment, and proposed to us to reconsider that hasty conclusion, and revert to our former plan. For two hours we discussed it, the rest of the Cabinet urging every

consideration we could think of on Cranborne, General Peel announcing frankly that if he and Carnarvon would give way, he would again waive his objections. . . . It all turned on Cranborne, who remained unmovable. At last, Lord Derby, seeing it was useless to persevere, said, rising, 'This is the end of the Conservative Party.' Then, as Cranborne was leaving the table, Peel said, 'Lord Cranborne, do you hear what Lord Derby says?' But Cranborne took no notice, and the die was cast."

It was not the end of the Party. The resignations were accepted, and the discussion of the Bill went on as before. "Clearly Cranborne will not long act with Disraeli, that is at the bottom of it," Hardy wrote in his diary on 26th February, and to seduce Hardy from his allegiance to Derby and Disraeli had been the vain hope of Cranborne and Carnarvon. Disraeli himself, who bore the brunt of the fight, was more than once in despair, and on 15th March told Derby and John Manners "that he thought he too must retire, that he could not fight against such odds." If he were not at odds with the House of Commons, he was at odds with the Cabinet. When he proposed to drop duality, the faithful John Manners resisted stoutly, and the Duke of Buckingham threatened resignation, upon which Derby, who remained "buoyant and hopeful," declared that another resignation would break up the Cabinet, and that he would not resign on duality. So, despite resignations and threats of resignation, the Bill, for good or evil,

was passed at last, to the great relief of everybody, especially of Her Majesty and Her Majesty's Government.

That Disraeli's triumph was complete there is no doubt. If the Reform Bill had to be passed, his conduct of it was a masterpiece of tactics. He carried the measure with a majority against him in a hostile House. He was conciliatory rather than firm. He recognised very early in the debate that he could not have his own way; he let those who he thought were sincerely desirous to give the Bill a proper shape suggest whatever seemed good to them, while he attacked Mr Gladstone's wrecking amendments with the severity they deserved. In brief, he asked the House to assent to certain principles, and said that the Government would defer to its opinions, and "in the application of those principles would consult the sense and accept the suggestions of the House." The Bill which he introduced was not passed. The safeguards on which he relied were lopped off one by one, and it cannot be said that he achieved his desire, which was "to prevent a preponderance of any class, and to give representation to the nation." The basis of the Bill as it was finally introduced was household rating suffrage, with payment of rates and two years' residence. To this was added the dual vote and certain fancy qualifications, such as a University degree and £50 in the funds. The dual vote was easily surrendered, and the fancy franchises passed

into forgetfulness. Meanwhile Disraeli had declared that the Government would never introduce household suffrage pure and simple, and household suffrage remained purely and simply when the Bill was passed. Presently it was proposed to reduce the two years' residence as a qualification to one year's residence, and the one year's residence was accepted. Lastly, lodgers were admitted to the franchise down to the limit of £10, and by repealing the Small Tenements Act, the Compound Householder was abolished, and half a million, made responsible for local rates, enfranchised. Yet it was a "glorious victory"—a victory in which strategy was completely forgotten in tactics. The army had been kept together, though it had failed to reach its objective.

As I have said, it was a personal triumph for Disraeli; and none of his friends appreciated his success more highly than John Manners. "P. Herbert has just told me," wrote John Manners to Disraeli on 27th March 1867, when the Bill was still hanging in the balance, "that he walked home last night with Enfield and H. Russell, who were loud in their praises of your speech, and said it made it safe to go into Committee. . . . On all sides I hear nothing but admiration and satisfaction with your speech."[1] And when the Bill was finally passed, John Manners' satisfaction equalled his leader's. "I called at Gros-

[1] The speech on the Second Reading, which effectually disposed of Mr Gladstone.

venor Gate," said Lord John on 12th September 1867, " ten minutes after you had left for Hughenden —to say good-bye and to congratulate you and Mrs Disraeli on the brilliant result of your great labours. You have now set your mark on England and the age, and achieved all that even my friendship and admiration anticipated. Let me hear that under ' the beechen shade ' you are shaking off the coil and cumber of that immense struggle."

Here and there voices were heard crying in the wilderness. Carlyle shouted aloud in pamphlets his just and unregarded prophecies. " Meanwhile," he asseverated, " the *good* that lies in this delirious ' new Reform Measure '—as there lies something of good in almost everything—is perhaps not inconsiderable. It accelerates notably what I have long looked upon as inevitable ;—pushes us at once into the Niagara Rapids : irresistibly propelled, with ever-increasing velocity, we shall now arrive ; who knows how *soon !* For a generation past it has been growing more and more evident that there was only this issue ; but now the issue has become imminent, the distance of it to be guessed by years. Traitorous politicians, grasping at votes, even votes from the rabble, have brought it on ;—one cannot but consider them traitorous ; and for one's own poor share would rather have been shot than been concerned in it." We are in the rapids now.

The tactical victory, then, for good or evil, seemed complete. " The Whigs had been dished," as Lord

Derby said. The leap in the dark had been taken, in the words of the same statesman, and a million voters had been added to the register. Thus the question of Reform was put aside for some twenty years in the House of Commons, and subsequent history has proved that in these measures, ironically called measures of reform, there is no finality whatever.

Throughout all these years the friendship which had united John Manners and Disraeli for more than twenty years suffered no diminution. Their sedulous correspondence touched on all subjects. To-day it is India that engrosses them, to-morrow Circassia. Now Lord John protests, in 1860, against the annexation of Savoy; now he submits to the leader of the Commons his schemes for Burlington House, or Chelsea Bridge, or the Embankment. His energetic policy in the Office of Works met with Disraeli's constant approval. In matters of general policy he was often intransigent where Disraeli was for moderation. In 1864 (on 9th March) he advocated with the bulk of his party the espousal of Denmark's cause against Prussia. He saw that for once justice would prove irresistibly popular. "At the close of the correspondence," he wrote to Disraeli, "I suspect Government will side with Denmark, and, if Germany persists, enter upon the *most popular*, the *easiest*, and the *cheapest* war (for it can be waged by our navy alone) of the century." And he perceived the strength which such a war would give to the opposite party.

" Palmerston," he went on, " will then become virtual dictator, and we shall not have even the poorest consolation of having forced upon him the policy which will have restored his popularity."

His plan, then, was to forestall the Government in proposing to defend Denmark. " If we make no sign before the holidays," he added, " my conviction is, after what passed last night, that Government will meet us on the 5th with an ultimatum sent to Germany, and the preparations in defence of Denmark—a war, I repeat, in the highest degree popular throughout the country. I hope you will see Derby on this subject without delay." Disraeli, who understood neither Prussia nor Bismarck, would take no hand in the affair, and Derby, too, hung cautiously back. The influence of the Queen, who was wholly on Germany's side, and the tergiversation of Russell, who encouraged the Danes to fight, and then withheld the support which he had promised, made the right course impossible. Bismarck had his way, and took the first step towards the unification of Germany. And let it be remembered that Lord John's vision went further than Disraeli and Derby could follow it, that if he had had his way the history of the last sixty years would have been far happier than it has proved. For the assault upon Denmark was but the opening campaign of the savage war which was brought to an end in 1919 after much bloodshed and the destruction of the world's wealth and prosperity.

Upon one other deplorable incident—the suspension

of Governor Eyre—Lord John Manners also showed a better vigour than his leaders. In October 1865 the negroes of Jamaica rose in rebellion against the Government. The rebels began their work at Marout Bay, ill-treated the police, whose business it was to suppress the disorder, and attacked the Court-house with ferocity. The brutality with which they massacred those whom they found at the Court-house cannot be described. They tore out the eyes and hearts of some of their victims. The women were more atrociously cruel than the men, and had not Governor Eyre seen to it that the rebellion was sternly suppressed, every white man in Jamaica might have been murdered and every white woman outraged. The Governor acted with promptitude and severity, suppressed the rebellion by executing no more than 394 persons, and was at once suspended for his pains. As always happens in this country when a brave man puts an end to indiscriminate massacre, the Radical philanthropists lifted up their voices, and demanded that the heaviest punishment should be meted out to the Governor, whose courage had saved the lives of their countrymen. Feeling an acute pity for the murderers, these pious gentry had no tears to shed for the victims. As Earl Russell said when the matter came to be debated in the House of Lords, "the question is not whether Governor Eyre was right in suppressing the rebellion, but whether he was right in adopting the means he did to suppress it." A characteristic confusion! The one and only important point

was that Governor Eyre, with the punishment of some 394 negroes, saved Jamaica from becoming a shambles, and the British Government showed their sympathy with the Governor by taking away his power.

Lord John Manners was from the beginning on Eyre's side, and he wished his party to champion the Governor's cause in the House of Commons. He thought that an immediate blow struck at the Government for suspending Mr Eyre, while an inquiry was held, would have a good prospect of success. "An amendment," he wrote to Disraeli on 26th December 1865, "to the paragraph in the Address concerning Jamaica would carry our party, and enable the anti-reforming Palmerstonian Liberals to get rid of the Reform Bill and the Russell Government together. The amendment need go no further than to express regret that her Ministers should have advised the Queen to suspend Eyre previous to inquiry—and, from all I hear and see, I believe precedent and public opinion are against the course taken by Government in that respect."

A milder course was preferred. Lord Derby made an ineffectual protest in the House of Lords, and in the House of Commons there were Buxtons and Brights and Mills to demand that Governor Eyre should be tried for his life. The Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the misdeeds of Mr Eyre discovered, as such Commissions are wont to discover, that praise was due for the skill, promptitude, and

vigour which Mr Eyre manifested during the early stages of the insurrection, and that the punishments inflicted were excessive. This form of words was used many times before the Jamaican rebellion, has been used many times since, and will be used many times again. The skill, promptitude, and vigour of Governor Eyre were instantly forgotten. In Earl Russell's amiable phrase, they were not "the question," and as they inspired no gratitude, so they aroused the fury of the mob. The "excessive punishments" drew tears from every philanthropic eye, and the man who served his country was disgraced. But credit is due to Lord John Manners that he turned a deaf ear to the clamour of a sentimental injustice, and would have saved its victim if he could.

There is one piece of correspondence between the two friends which proves how far we have declined in delicacy since their time, and which is worth citing here. "Saunders and Ottley," wrote John Manners to Disraeli on 5th December 1860, "have asked me to write the History of the Country Party from its formation in 1845. Before answering them I should like to have your opinion. First, is it expedient that such a work should be concocted at all? Secondly, if so, ought it to be written by one who has been as much engaged in the affairs of the Party as I have been? My own judgment would lead me to answer both questions in the negative; but I suspend a final decision until I know your view." Disraeli's view was clarity itself. "I should strongly recom-

mend you," he wrote, "to decline the proposition. Such a task could not be undertaken by a person in your position except for the sake of enduring reputation. That is not to be obtained with the reserve and restrictions which the recentness of the topic would entail on the writer, especially when he himself had been a principal actor in the scene. The subject itself is good, but, if treated, must be kept in MS. for the next twenty years, when probably you yourself may be Prime Minister, which will add to the piquancy of the publication." Lord John lost no time in acting upon Disraeli's opinion, which coincided precisely with his own, and there the matter ended. And if we compare the practice of to-day, when Ministers carry copies of private papers away from their offices and pack them into biographies, we can but remark a sad decay in manners.

It is not only in the free and frank discussion of their letters that the two men proved their close alliance. At times of crisis Disraeli was never so confident as when John Manners was there to support him. He was, moreover, always desirous of his friend's advancement. In 1858, for instance, when Lytton resigned from the Colonial Office, Disraeli urged Derby to appoint John Manners to the vacant post. "Never mind," he wrote to Lord Derby, "John Manners must have the Colonies: he will do *very well*, better than Labouchere. I wished him to have it, and indeed never contemplated that Lytton should ever have been in the Cabinet, had it not been for our Chief's

too gracious notice of him in 1855."[1] But, once more standing in Lord John's place, Stanley consented to be Colonial Minister, and Lord John, with relief, remained at the Board of Works. His equanimity suffered a far more violent shock in 1866, when a more difficult post came near to be thrust upon him. He wrote an account of it himself in the journal which he kept occasionally, and I cannot do better than transcribe his own words.

"On Saturday, 30th June 1866," thus he wrote, "dined with Lord and Lady Derby. After dinner Lord D. offered me my choice between returning to my old office (that of Works) and the Irish Secretaryship with a seat in the Cabinet. I said I would rather that he should give me one or the other as he thought best for the interests of the Party. He thanked me, and said he should like to consult Naas' wishes. On Monday morning Naas called on me, having been requested by Lord D. to arrange with me our respective places. We decided, on public grounds, that it would be best for us to resume our old places, and Naas communicated that result to Lord D. In the afternoon, however, I received a note from Disraeli begging me to call upon him at once.[2] I did so, and found him con-

[1] See Buckle's 'Life of Disraeli,' vol. v. p. 118.

[2] Disraeli's note was imperative. Thus it ran: "My dear John, you must come to me immediately or as soon as you possibly can. Nothing must prevent you. I am remaining, and shall remain, at home until you arrive. Yours ever,—D. Nothing bad."

siderably agitated. He said his object was to prepare me for an offer from Lord Derby of the Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland with a Peerage. Much perplexed and confounded, I endeavoured to point out the obvious objection to such an arrangement, but without success, and at 8 o'clock I saw Lord D. He had just come back from Windsor, where he had submitted the proposal to the Queen, and obtained her consent. He said he would have taken the liberty with no other man, and the whole combination depended upon my assent. 'It will be salvation if you consent.' Ultimately, with a heavy heart, I did accept, and passed a most wretched night. On Tuesday morning 'The Times' denounced the appointment, and going to St James's Square directly after breakfast I succeeded in inducing Lord D. to try another scheme. He telegraphed to the Queen for her leave to appoint Lord Abercorn, and after a most miserable day her assent was obtained, and on Thursday I was finally offered and accepted my old office."

It is an interesting episode in the making of Cabinets, and it illustrates at every point the diffidence and unselfishness of John Manners. Although, as will presently be seen, he passed more years as a Cabinet Minister than any other of his contemporaries, he never indulged his own ambition; he never made politics a stepping-stone to worldly advancement. He thought only of serving his country loyally, and of doing what he considered his duty to his party. When he told Derby that he would rather that he

should give him one office or another as he thought best for the interests of the Government, he spoke but the simple truth. He always subordinated his own ambition, if indeed he entertained any, to the convenience of his colleagues. Sedulous in counsel, he was indifferent to the office which was assigned him, and he was happiest in offices of slight responsibility. He was, in truth, diffident by nature, and inclined to underrate his conspicuous gifts. He shrank from the highest posts which were offered him as though he felt himself unequal to the heavy burden.

John Manners' retiring character made the denunciation of 'The Times' less easily excusable. Not that it weighed an ounce with the victim of it, who had from the first been eager not to accept the responsibility of the Lord-Lieutenancy. It was only Lord Derby's assurance — "it will be salvation if you accept"—that persuaded him to think about it. Lord Derby and Disraeli, who had sat with him in Cabinet from time to time for fourteen years, who had heard him in debate and in the council-chamber, were well able to estimate his courage and his judgment. 'The Times,' ignoring the facts, chose to think of the suggested appointment as a joke. "In every stroke of wit," thus it wrote, "may be discerned, say the metaphysicians, the elements of suddenness and incongruity; and if these ingredients be sufficient, it must be allowed that Lord Derby meditated a very witty thing. The announcement of Lord John Manners as Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland

was inimitable." And then it proceeded to twit him with the memories of Young England. Nearly a quarter of a century had passed since Lord John had dreamed, with Disraeli and Smythe, those dreams of youth, and only malice could have persuaded the writer of 'The Times' to remind the world of Lord John's early magnanimous indiscretions. "He is of the generous temper," said the leader-writer, "of the Princes of France, who would feed a hungry populace with cakes, and we are not satisfied that he would not have attempted to get rid of Fenianism by the erection of Maypoles, and cure pauperism by the multiplication of holy days." There is not much to be said against Maypoles and holy days, especially in such a country as Ireland, but to pretend that Lord John had not modified his views nor added to his experience in five-and-twenty years is merely the work of personal prejudice.

However, little as he cared for 'The Times,' he was glad, indeed, to be out of it. "With a relief I can't describe," he writes to his brother, 3rd July 1866, "I learn that Lord Abercorn has accepted the Lord-Lieutenancy, and hasten to tell you." The duke's reply was sensible and downright, as we should expect. He was moved by mixed feelings. He saw the force of the objections. For many reasons he was glad that Lord John was not going to Ireland. But, said he, "I must own I feel now a sort of regret that it is not to be, which I cannot well define, and I fancy that it is partly that I think that your government, at a

critical period, when great determination blended with equal conciliation is required, would have been so valuable to Lord Derby's Government and to Ireland, and also because it would have been the most direct way of giving the lie to the libeller who disgraces the columns of 'The Times.'" [1] This letter affords yet another proof of the intimate friendship in the bonds of which the two brothers were closely bound. Though they had long since been disparted in political opinion, the affection which held them together never varied. They were always ready to give one another help or counsel, and both were loyal to the tradition which they shared in common, in spite of differences in policy. Lord John summed up the position in which

[1] A letter from Abraham Hayward, dated 4th July 1866, shows that the article in 'The Times' was not widely approved. The testimony is of the greater value, because Hayward was violently opposed to Lord Derby's Government. "My dear Lord John," he wrote, "At the risk of being thought presuming or indiscreet, I must enter my protest (not, I trust, a solitary one) against the gross injustice done to you for the second time this morning in 'The Times.' When I heard of your appointment, I was simple enough to think it a very good one, both in a public and in a party point of view. Your liberality of tone, especially on religious matters, struck me as especially adapted to calm the fears roused by the return of the Ultra-Protestant party to office; and for the life of me I cannot understand how you can be less fit as regards judgment, knowledge, or experience of affairs, than the best of the dukes and marquises who have hitherto been named as duly qualified candidates; in fact, I should consider you a good deal more fit. Hearing and seeing a good deal, I utterly deny that the announcement was received unfavourably. This sort of attack does no real harm to anyone, but it provokes me in my own despite."

they stood clearly and truthfully: "If we differ," he wrote to his brother on 11th May 1868, "as to some past events in which we have been active, in the present great crisis of our country we are entirely agreed as to the principles at stake, and any divergence of opinion as to the best mode of meeting the common enemy is what must be expected where men of various minds and temperaments come to consider so momentous and critical a decision." Thus was it between them in 1868, and thus it remained unto the end.

In the meantime, on 15th May 1862, Lord John had married Miss Janetta Hughan, the daughter of Thomas Hughan, of Airds, Galloway, an accomplished lady, whose interest in politics was profound, and who, whether Lord John was in or out of office, was always ready with help and counsel. Two years before, he had begun to build a house in Scotland, St Mary's Tower, near Birnam,[1] and there are constant references in his letters to its progress. In October 1860 he tells his brother that he has added three acres to the original ten, and that Stirling has invented some charming cyphers for the external panels and the ceilings of the house. To his brother also he dedicated "the first letter written from St Mary's" on 27th August 1863, and there, in pleasant retirement, he spent his holidays for many a year.

[1] See an article contributed by Lord John to 'Blackwood's Magazine' in September 1882.

CHAPTER XII.

OFFICE AND OPPOSITION.

THE months which followed the passing of the Reform Bill are an anti-climax. It is plainly impossible to keep a triumph in politics at a high level, and no sooner does a vexed problem find a solution in the House of Commons than the other side, if it be wise, discovers another question upon which its torn and scattered forces may unite. Mr Gladstone was never without a sense of tactics, and by a spirited attack upon the Established Church of Ireland he persuaded his recalcitrant followers to forget at once the Cave of Adullam and the plot hatched in the tea-room. Before this happened there had been a sudden change in the Tory Party. Lord Derby had resigned the leadership on the ground of ill-health, and Disraeli had become Prime Minister of England. In his own words, he had "climbed the greasy pole." Lord John was among the first to hear that his friend had attained the height of his ambition.

The story may be told in Lord John's own words: "After two hours in the Privy Council Office this

morning on Education Bill," he wrote in his journal on 5th February 1868, " I was finishing my luncheon at my office when Montagu Corry was announced. It was to tell me from Disraeli that Lord Derby had resigned, and that on his advice the Queen had sent for D., who wished to know personally or by letter from each of his colleagues whether they would assist him. I at once said he need not trouble about me, and that I would either call upon him or not, as might be most agreeable and convenient to him. Accordingly later in the afternoon I called at Grosvenor Gate, and was shown up to his little upstairs study. With more emotion than I had ever seen him manifest before, he fairly embraced me, and after receiving my congratulations gave me a short account of what had happened. On the Saturday Lord D. informed him of his resignation, but said he was too exhausted to add more. General Grey came up from Osborne with orders not to leave London except with him as Prime Minister, and in case of any colleagues proving recalcitrant to urge the Queen's strong personal wish that her new Minister should be supported. Her expressions to him were most gracious, that even if Lord Derby had not recommended him, she had determined from what she had noticed of his character and conduct to offer him the highest post. The only painful letter he had had to write was to the Chancellor, whom he could not include—not from ill-will to him, but because while even at the formation of our Government Lord Derby

had told him his possession of the Great Seal could only be temporary, now with Lord Derby disabled it became absolutely necessary to import fresh debating power into the Government in the House of Lords, and that Cairns had accepted the office."

Thus Lord John, who had the satisfaction of seeing Disraeli's first Cabinet constructed without let or hindrance. He himself retained his old office at the Board of Works, and Ward Hunt, the only newcomer, became Chancellor of the Exchequer. Disraeli did what he could to advance his friend, and did it in vain. When in July 1868 Mayo was appointed Viceroy of India, Disraeli proposed that Lord John should succeed him in Ireland as Chief Secretary. He thought at first of offering the post to Lord Elcho, a friend of Lord Abercorn, but, wrote Disraeli to Derby, "His excellency seems to think that the political connection might disturb the fervour of the friendship." And so, thought he, "it must be John Manners, who is sensible, conciliatory, and very painstaking, and certainly will not 'override' Abercorn or quarrel with anybody." [1] It was not to be. Lord John refused the Chief Secretaryship, as two years before he had refused the Viceroyalty, and thus deprived Ireland of his statesmanship, himself of experience. Two months before he had also declined, after a week's anxious consideration, what he called a "glittering post"—the Governor-Generalship of

[1] To Mr Buckle's 'Life of Disraeli,' vol. v. p. 74, I am indebted for this quotation.

Canada. The Duke of Buckingham had already offered the high office to Lord Cranborne, who had passed it by, and declared that, were he not Lord-Lieutenant of his county, he would take it himself. "What shall I do?" asked Lord John in uncertainty, and then went to Disraeli for advice.

Disraeli, like the good counsellor that he was, urged him to accept, though Lord John's departure from England would have been regretted by none more bitterly than he. "Nothing could be more frank or kind than his advice," wrote Lord John. "He said the Government would hold out until after the Election, but that it was very doubtful whether we should have a majority in the new Parliament. In that case he should retire, and live probably in seclusion, in which he should miss me. Mayo and I are the two of his colleagues for whom he wished to provide, and he advised me to accept, though he should miss my advice in Cabinet. He spoke flatteringly of my Parliamentary career, and showed a depth of feeling hardly to be expected." Perhaps this unexpected depth of feeling made the refusal certain.[1]

[1] Thus he wrote in his journal. Disraeli himself he addressed with greater warmth in a letter dated 30th April 1868: "In spite of all your encouraging kindness, for which I shall never cease to be grateful, I have finally decided—mainly on private and family grounds—to decline the great post offered to me last week, and have written to the Duke of Buckingham to that effect. Though private considerations have determined this decision, I own I derive satisfaction from thinking that it will enable me to remain by your side to the end of the

Meanwhile the first Cabinet of Disraeli's first Administration had been held. All were present, and "the Prime Minister began by thanking us all for the confidence we had shown in his difficulty, and said no man in the room felt so keenly Lord Derby's loss." Again I quote Lord John's journal. They then discussed Irish railways, Irish education, Irish land, and the Irish Church, and these questions engrossed them to no settled purpose until the end of the session. Ireland, however, did not absorb all their energies, and there was much talk about education in England also. Lord John had as early as 28th January, in Lord Derby's time, advocated a reform of the Education Department and the creation of a Ministry of Education. For this plan he won the assent of all his colleagues, though it was left for other hands to carry out what he proposed. Indeed, whatever discussions were held in 1868 were merely academic. Disraeli's Government was a government of caretakers, who would have been satisfied if only they had been able to cut or trim the frayed edges of the Reform Bill in Scotland and Ireland. They had no power in the House of Commons and little influence in the country, which showed them no gratitude for the privilege of an extended franchise. The one real question which was asked again and

most eventful chapter in our political life. Let it terminate as it may, it will always be to me a source of unalloyed pleasure to have seen you at the summit of power, and to have had my humbler fortunes linked—unbrokenly—to yours."

again was: "Shall we resign or dissolve?" "The Queen, desirous that her Ministers should advise her as long as possible, declined the proffered resignations," wrote Lord John on 4th May, "and gave *carte blanche* as to dissolution."

However, no decision had been made when Parliament was prorogued, and it was not until 2nd December, after a General Election, that Disraeli announced to the members of his Cabinet the acceptance of their resignations. The valedictory words which Disraeli addressed to his colleagues in the Cabinet are recorded by Lord John. "The Queen," said Disraeli, "had accepted our resignations with many most kind and flattering remarks on the manner in which we have discharged our duties. She has expressed her wish that I should continue in public life; and although I cannot disguise from you or myself that the position is very difficult, I will, if you support me, continue to fight the battle." Thus came to an end Disraeli's first tenure of the Premiership, and as he resigned office, asking nothing for himself, he prayed the Queen to confer a peerage upon his wife. Sincerely did Lord John congratulate the new Viscountess. "My dear Lady Beaconsfield," he wrote on 27th November 1868, "when I saw your husband two hours ago I did not know the good news. Now my wife has told me of it, and I don't lose a minute in writing you a line of most hearty and jubilant congratulation. Even more than the thing itself, gratifying as that

is, both as recognition of his great services and of your mutual devotion, is the manner in which it has been done. Long may you live to wear the Coronet, and long may he rejoice in witnessing your happiness." So that, if the months of office had been months of doubt and even of humiliation, the end brought with it a felicitous compliment.

The period of Mr Gladstone's Government was a period of unrest and disquietude. The Prime Minister commanded a Cabinet of all the talents. It seemed as though he might realise the constant ambition of the Whigs and become tenant for life; and, from the first, acute observers saw and knew that the seeds of dissolution were already sown. Mr Gladstone, untiring and thoughtless as ever in innovation, attempted to pack into as small a compass as possible every kind of reform. He assailed Ireland with a fury which ceased only with his death, and made plain the way for revolution and severance. Refusing to hear the warning voice of tradition, he believed that what might seem right and prudent when set upon paper was right and prudent also when set in action. As we look back upon those three years of perilous activity, we may measure the vast difference which lies between the hopes of politicians and their fulfilment. Vain or disastrous appear many of the measures violently disputed and complacently passed by the House of Commons, dominated by Mr Gladstone. For Ireland, as I have said, the road to ruin was made sure. Mr W. E. Forster's famous Education

Act has weakened the ties which once bound the family together; it has decreased the community's sense of responsibility; it has led to a vast deal of useless fanaticism; and it has brought education no nearer to the people. Mr Childers' reform of the Army had to be shaped and amplified by Mr Gathorne Hardy before it achieved its due effect. The Ballot Bill was passed, and met with none of the results which some feared and others hoped for. And it was not only by too hasty legislation that Mr Gladstone perplexed the Houses of Parliament. The scandal of the Alabama claims did nothing to reassure the country, and Mr Lowe's financial policy came very near to destroy the Government.

None of these signs of weakness escaped the critics of Mr Gladstone and his colleagues. Lord John, in a letter to Disraeli (17th December 1869), records that at Leicester 2000 working-men cheered the name of Disraeli. He notes that the strong reactionary feeling of the northern counties is fast spreading downwards. "The popular sentiment is anti-Irish," he wrote, "and a working-man excited great applause by the *mot*, 'what is wanted is justice in, not for, Ireland.'" A year later (21st October 1870) he points out to Disraeli the growing unpopularity of the Government's economical policy—a policy which affected England's influence in Europe. "Cardwell's Oxford speech," said he, "doesn't seem a very successful defence, and I see no reason why we should not contrast our scale of armaments when we left office with

theirs of last spring. The real question appears to me to be: What force ought England to have ready to land on the Continent at the outbreak of a War? I am disposed to say 50,000 men; then comes the further question—a purely military one—What number of men does that render necessary for our standing army? Not less, I suppose, than 100,000; and even in the interest of peace, England ought to be for the future in that position. With an overpowering fleet and that force available, she would be able to exercise an influence in Europe, of which since the Danish disgrace[1] she has been deprived, and which would be exercised in the interests of peace."

Such was the burden of his correspondence. The Government seemed to him, and to so acute a critic as Gathorne Hardy, to be *in extremis*. For both men the wish may have been father to the thought, but thought as well as wish was generally shared. "The Army Debate bids fair to go on into next week," wrote Lord John to his brother on 7th March 1871. "The idea of paying 12 or 14 millions to abolish

[1] It is proof of Lord John's political foresight that he set a black mark against the year in which we left Denmark to its fate. In writing to Gathorne Hardy on 10th May 1878, Lord John said: "With respect to Foreign Policy, I should take a much more cheerful view of the maintenance of peace were I assured that Germany and Russia knew that we are prepared at a fortnight's notice to send 40,000 men and an overpowering fleet to any part of the Continental coast that might be necessary, and that we could count on the active support of Scandinavia, Holland, and Belgium. We have not yet recovered from the disgrace of abandoning Denmark."

purchase staggers many sober Liberals, while the Army almost to a man repudiates it. Government are sinking every day, and Disraeli begins to fear that they will collapse too soon." Disraeli's fear was unjustified. The Government collapsed, it is true, but in the fulness of time. "Meanwhile," said Lord John, "Gladstone's unpopularity with his own side is extraordinary; and Stansfeld's admission to the Cabinet won't do much to restore it." On the other hand, if Gladstone was losing favour by excess of zeal, Disraeli too was falling into disrepute with his party through lack of it. In those years he seemed to be under a cloud, somewhat listless in debate, and frequently absent from the House. "Disraeli ill and afraid of the East wind," comments Gathorne Hardy in his valuable journal.

By one of those gusts of disloyalty, bitterer than an east wind, which overtakes now and then the most closely united parties, a handful of Tories was driven suddenly into revolt. Expressing an open discontent, they demanded that Lord Derby[1] should be chosen leader of the party in Disraeli's stead. The project was taken seriously, and gravely discussed. A solemn meeting of leaders was held at Burleigh, and it fell to Lord Cairns to suggest that Disraeli should be told of the general feeling, and that Lord Derby should be approached. When it came to the point of action, not one of Disraeli's old colleagues possessed either

[1] The fifteenth Earl. The fourteenth Earl, "the Rupert of debate," died on 23rd October 1869.

the wish or the courage to tell their chief of the plot. It is characteristic of John Manners' loyal temper that, as Gathorne Hardy says, he "alone professed ignorance of the feeling in or out of doors." So little, indeed, was John Manners perturbed by the discussion that he wrote to Disraeli from Burleigh as though no underground work was going forward. "A general feeling seems to prevail among our friends assembled here," he wrote, "that the Collier job should be attacked in the Commons as well as in the Lords, and a fear is entertained that unless the arrangement is made beforehand Fawcett will give notice of a resolution the first night of the session."

Lord John, at any rate, esteemed the movement at its proper worth, and if a hint of it ever came to Disraeli's ears, he dealt with it in his own manner. Two months later he made at Manchester the famous speech, in which he likened the sad heroes of the Treasury Bench to a row of extinct volcanoes. Thus he secured his leadership by the only method possible—by showing a capacity to lead. And no more need be said of it beyond the comment made by Gathorne Hardy twenty years later. "Looking back on the Burleigh discussion on leadership, how futile it seems! Time did the work, and showed what the position really was. Fancy our having begun 1874 with Derby as our leader! How impossible! and what a fiasco would have ensued!"

If during those restless years neither leader held the confidence of his party, there was a vast deal of

debating to be done, and in this Lord John Manners bore his part. He had left far behind the years of halting speech, and had become a ready and a practised debater. He recognised that it was the business of an opposition to oppose, as indeed it is, and oppose he did, not in the spirit of a factious obstruction, but with a settled purpose to amend what he could not prevent, as the other side freely acknowledged. His views on Ireland were always sound and soundly expressed, and never did he speak to better purpose, never was speech of his better received than when, on 22nd March 1870, he advocated the prevention and detection of crime in Ireland, and the suppression of the incendiary Press in Dublin. The theme was not so old, the remedies proposed were not so vain, as they have become since; and with so fine a spirit did Lord John castigate Gladstone and Lord Clarendon, that neither the one nor the other attempted to rebut the charges made against them. Lord John's retrospect was such as might have been made with truth almost any time the last fifty years. "We have a state of crime which is rapidly increasing," said he, "bringing the sum total of these agrarian crimes up to 767 in the course of the year. We have the statement as to criminal articles in the revolutionary and seditious Press, which, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, call for this stringent measure of coercion, every instance given by the Solicitor-General occurring in the spring, summer, or autumn of last year. And what happens? Parliament is

prorogued without any measure being introduced." Why should Mr Gladstone be at the pains to introduce any measure? When the news of his accession to office surprised him in the act to cut down a tree, "My mission is to pacify Ireland," he exclaimed. After which declaration it mattered not what he said or did. It mattered not that the peace which he sent into Ireland cut and gashed like an axe.

To Lord John these things mattered a great deal. He deplored gravely the effect in Ireland of Gladstone's language. The Prime Minister had said that "the Protestant Ascendancy was the upas-tree of Ireland, which must be destroyed." He had further endowed the upas-tree with three branches—the first was the Church, the second was the land, the third was education. Thus did the great pacificator excite the rebels to a bloodthirsty fury. Meanwhile, Clarendon had used yet more dangerous language. He had declared openly that "certain acts supposed to be done by certain landlords were felonious," and the Irish argued from that statement of Clarendon's "that every landlord in Ireland who presumed to regain possession of his land was condemned as a felon and ought to be shot." So Gladstone and Clarendon cynically sowed the storm, and obstinately refused to believe that there was any whirlwind to be reaped.

As I have said, Lord John took an active opposing part in all the discussions of the years of Gladstone's domination. He intervened many times in the debates about the Education Bill, and defended, with

what energy he might, the principle of denominational schools. He stoutly attacked Mr Osborne Morgan's Burials Bill, speaking not for the clergy but as a layman. "The honourable gentleman opposite (Mr Henry Richard)," said he, "asked those who oppose this measure to put themselves into the position of those who supported it; he (Lord John) could say that he had applied that test to himself, and he could with a clear conscience oppose it. In Scotland he was a dissenter, but he had never supported the measure to abolish what was sometimes termed Church rates in Scotland."

With an untiring persistence he spoke and acted against the Ballot Bill—"the obvious system of secret voting," he called it—and held that, should the system come into use, it should be "supplemented and relieved by a system of voting papers." He objected to it for the reason, among others, that it led to indifference and small polls, and gave France, Australia, and the London School Board Election for his examples. And though *post hoc* is not always *propter hoc*, this argument of his cannot be gainsaid. Nor did he forget his early struggles for the children employed in factories, and he is found asking the Home Secretary (on 3rd August 1871) which Government establishments were exempt from the operation of the Factory and Workshop Regulation Acts. The reply was "all, unless specifically mentioned." Lord John, still unsatisfied, gave notice of his intention to propose the insertion of a

clause on this subject in the Bill before Parliament, and when the Government refused to accept his principle reverted to the question more than once. When in 1872 the Workshops Act was again discussed, Lord John pressed that it should be put into force, and not "put off" as before with an evasion. The Home Secretary assured him that "his (the Home Secretary's) anxiety as to the enforcement of the Acts and as to their importance was as strong as ever, but his opinion was that it was best to proceed with caution and not too rapidly." Thus spoke officialism with its customary voice.

In 1870, when France was engaged with her hopeless struggle with Bismarck, Prince Gortchakoff suddenly repudiated the clause in the Treaty of Paris which decreed the neutralisation of the Black Sea. His imperial master, he said, could "no longer consider himself bound to the terms of the Treaty of March 1856, in so far as these limit his rights of sovereignty in the Black Sea." The moment seemed opportune for the Russian, and France's embarrassment, no doubt, explained the insolence of the despatch. At the instance of Bismarck a conference was called in London, when war seemed imminent. Unfortunately, Jules Favre, the representative of the Government of Bordeaux, was shut up in Paris, and could not agree with Bismarck on the terms of safe-conduct. Eventually the representative of France, the power after England most intimately concerned, attended only the last meeting of the Conference. It

is not surprising that many thought the moment of the Conference ill chosen for the dignity of poor stricken France, and Dilke moved that "the House regrets that Her Majesty's Government accepted a proposition for the assembling of a Conference under the circumstances disclosed in the papers relating to Prince Gortchakoff's circular note."

To the merriment of Sir Robert Peel and others, Lord John supported Dilke in an energetic and eloquent speech. "Prussia," he said, "was then maintaining a struggle with France, our Ally during the Crimean War, and during that war Prussia was actuated by what has been called 'benevolent neutrality.' Was the course we pursued dictated by honour or good feeling towards France? Surely it could not have been." He thought, quite fairly, that England, instead of accepting Prussia's proposal without delay, should have communicated with France before taking any step. With his keen sense of chivalry, Lord John took the side of the vanquished power. He won little sympathy in the House, and yet the Government would have found it a hard matter to refute his argument. "You have now, by abrogating the 3rd Article of the Treaty of Paris"—thus he addressed the House in conclusion—"enabled Russia to win back by her diplomacy all that she had lost in war during those two years." All the lives, he thought, had been sacrificed in vain—the common consequence of war. "What, then," he asked, "is the conclusion? That it was not until the Right Hon. Gentleman opposite acceded

to office that Russia saw her opportunity. She saw that the Right Hon. Gentleman was a Minister from whom she thought she might hope to extract the fruit of the tremendous struggle which England had engaged in with her—a struggle which had to be engaged in, I am afraid, owing to the weakness of the Right Hon. Gentleman and the Colleagues with whom he acted, and a struggle which the Right Hon. Gentleman did little or nothing either to prevent or sustain." And what of Turkey? "While our treaty obligations towards Turkey remain technically the same, our moral obligation to maintain her integrity is increased." Dilke withdrew his motion, but at least two voices had been raised for France, and the House of Commons had witnessed an unwonted spectacle, a high Tory and an extreme Radical speaking on the same side and to the same purpose.

Again, in May 1871, he supported by vote and speech Jacob Bright's "Women's Disabilities Bill," and his alliance with Jacob Bright must surely have been to his friends a greater surprise than his alliance with Dilke. Yet let it be remembered that Mr Jacob Bright's proposal seemed to the unwary simple enough. It was merely to give female ratepayers the privilege of voting at parliamentary elections. It was no part of its design to abolish at a stroke all the barriers which nature and tradition have set between the two sexes. Moreover, the bringing in of the Bill had not been preceded by acts of a vile iconoclasm, by the wicked wanton destruction of things of beauty

such as churches and pictures ; nor did its supporters detect the dangers which always lurk in taking the first step. It was consonant also with the unsuspecting chivalry of Lord John that he should uphold the cause of women. His argument was plain enough. "Now I am prepared," said he, "at all times to vindicate, if necessary, the rights and privileges of this House, but to say that female ratepayers are not worthy to form a part of the Constituencies of Members of Parliament is an arrogation of personal dignity and superiority which I am by no means able to support. Under all these circumstances I confess I am unable to see any reason why the female ratepayers should be any longer excluded from the exercise of the franchise at Parliamentary elections, and I shall therefore give my support to the second reading of the Bill." It was, indeed, the arrogation of personal superiority which irked him, and his resolve was strengthened, no doubt, by the fact that Disraeli went into the same lobby with him.

When the Bill was discussed a year later Lord John was still on Jacob Bright's side. This time he assumed that the competence of women to vote in one kind of election gave them competence in all. "To say that women may vote for such a Board (the School Board), and sit on it, and yet are disqualified by their sex—for that is the argument—from voting for those who sit in this House for St Ives or Bodmin, is one of the most illogical propositions I have ever heard." He thought it unfair that the opponents

of the Bill should denounce, before their due time, the clauses which might be in some future Bill. "When those extravagant proposals," said he, "as to feminine judges, jurors, and Members of Parliament, which my Right Honourable friend (Mr Bouverie) has conjured up are really made, I shall meet them with as decided an opposition as the Right Honourable Gentleman." Mr Bouverie was in the right of it. He knew, as Lord John knew well, when he was opposing an unwelcome reform, that it is impossible to check innovation where and when you like. The politician is always confronted to-morrow with the "logic" of yesterday's misdeed; and though, had the Bill passed and had Mr Bouverie's fears been justified, and they would have been, Lord John would have opposed the new attempt at legislation, he would have opposed it in vain. Meanwhile he used the reformer's favourite argument of surrender to avoid strife. "My Right Honourable friend," said he, "has spoken of women becoming agitators, and wishes to see them restored to their proper functions and the duties of domestic life. But does he not see that by the course he persistently adopts he is driving women into the very attitude he deplores and condemns? . . . By passing the Bill they will terminate this agitation, put an end to an unreasonable and illogical exception, and satisfy a reasonable demand." Again his Right Honourable friend had sound sense on his side. Women have proved their capacity for agitation beyond dispute, and the general principle that concession is the best

method of putting an end to agitation would bring revolution upon us in a very few years.

Meanwhile, Lord John was, as ever, interchanging letters with Disraeli. He told him always such things as, in the kindliness of his temper, he thought that he would like to hear. Now it is that Disraeli's name was cheered at a meeting in the Midlands, now it is that "a neighbour just home from China through America"—this he wrote on 10th November 1870—"said he made the acquaintance of Lothair at the Salt Lake." And presently his friend was to need all the sympathy that Lord John could give him. As I have said, there was a time in which Disraeli seemed to have withdrawn himself from the House of Commons, when his supporters were minded, for a moment, to set another in his place. The cause of his inactivity was the failing health of Lady Beaconsfield. His anxiety, to-day greater, to-morrow less, knew no relief. On 26th September 1872 he seemed sanguine of her recovery, and wrote not without assurance to Lord John. "We are absolutely going to Hughenden to-day! There has been," said he, "during the last week, a marked, and, now I begin to hope, a permanent improvement in my wife's health, and she has suddenly resolved to try change again. I am sorry we go home in the fall of the leaf, and that, too, in a sylvan land; but home alone can ensure the comfort and the ease which an invalid requires. If she could only, I will not say regain her appetite, but the least desire of sustenance, I should be most

confident of the future, the buoyancy of her spirit being so marvellous. But this may come; there is a streak of dawn."

The streak of dawn soon vanished from the sky. On 15th December 1872, Lady Beaconsfield died, and left her husband desolate. This is not the place to tell the story of Disraeli's bereavement. Fortunately for him, the uncertainty of the political situation demanded his return to the world of affairs, and he threw himself into them with his wonted energy. Very soon he began to take comfort in the presence of his friends, and to insist upon an interchange of letters. "My dear John Manners," he wrote on 29th December 1872, "best and dearest of friends! I am in town on business, and shall be here till Friday, when I go away for a day or two, but not to Hughenden. On Monday—*i.e.*, to-morrow week—I shall return here, and probably remain for a few days. It will be my last visit to this house, where I have passed a moiety of my existence with an inseparable and ever-interesting companion. I have not seen any one—indeed, I have scarcely left my room—for I broke down Sunday, and feared I was in for a long illness—but I am on my legs to-day. You I will always see, but I do not wish to precipitate our meeting. I have not yet subdued the supreme sorrow of my life." A fortnight later he is at Hughenden, where he tells Lord John that he will be glad to receive him, though his reception may be roughish. "I shall remain here till Parliament meets, and where

I go then is still doubtful. The foxes have their caves and the wild birds their nests, but I have no place whatever to lay my head. I have seen no one yet, but I am to see Cairns on Monday, who comes here for a night, to give me his views on affairs in general, which will break the ice, and, I trust, I shall get into working order."

Lord John, ever ready with sympathy and response, sends his friend now a piece of gossip, now a piece of sincere appreciation. On 24th August 1873 he reports from Matlock a rumour of dissension in the Government. "St Albans," he says, "who has been fishing in these parts from Buxton, told me the other day that Mrs Lowe—also at Buxton—said to him, that if Gladstone had the spirit of a mouse, he would have sent both Monsell and Ayrton packing, and kept her Robin at the Exchequer; so cordial relations do not seem to have been restored by the late changes." And Disraeli, assuring his friend that "he cannot do him a greater kindness than sometimes to write to him," that "a letter from a friend is like the sight of a sail to me on a desert isle, but when it comes from the best and dearest of friends it is cheering indeed," replies to Lord John four days later, and expresses his keen pleasure at Gladstone's embarrassments. "I am greatly amused," he writes, "with the fast-shifting incidents of the political scene, and so I suspect are some others of higher mettle. I don't suppose that Gladstone at present has decided on any course whatever, but he will not go out without

attempting something. I fear he is deeply mortified by the utter destruction of the prestige of his administration, and that his only thought now is to, what they call, rehabilitate it before it disappears. He will find this a hard task."

It was a hard task indeed. Disraeli's refusal in the early part of 1873 to take office without a dissolution had driven Gladstone to resume the burden of office which he thought he had securely put off. Many other things had combined to discredit the administration. The Ballot Bill had not been popular; the award in the case of the Alabama had stung England to anger; the promotion of Sir Robert Collier to a high position,[1] for which he was not eligible, as well as the trick by which the difficulty was overcome, had made the Government ridiculous. But nothing shook Gladstone's position so dangerously as his determination not to seek re-election at Greenwich, when he added the Chancellorship of the Exchequer to the First Lordship of the Treasury. On 7th November 1873, Lord John sent to Disraeli the latest news of this manœuvre, which he had picked up. "If you have not heard the story of how Gladstone decided against vacating his Greenwich seat," thus he wrote, "it may amuse you to hear the version which I had from a person to whom Sir R. Collier

[1] Sir Robert Collier, the Attorney-General, was appointed a paid member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. For this post only judges were eligible, and Sir Robert was made a Judge of Common Pleas for two days.

told it. He—Collier—was at St Mary's Tower, staying with Millais (to whom I had let it), when he received a telegram from Gladstone summoning him to Balmoral. On his arriving there, G. said, 'I want you to consult with Jessel about my seat, and give me your joint opinion.' The next morning accordingly the two ex-law officers put their heads together, and—failed to arrive at a joint opinion. Collier held that the seat was vacated, Jessel that it was not, on the ground that the junction of the Exchequer with the First Lordship constituted one whole new office, which, under the Act, he was at liberty to take in exchange for his former office. Collier's observation was that such a view was too subtle and too technical to be successfully maintained; but Gladstone accepted it, and retained his seat on it." Gladstone would. Nevertheless, Sir Robert was in the right. Jessel's view did appear too subtle to the general public, and Gladstone's unpopularity increased.

And then, as though fate mocked the Radicals, Disraeli won a series of successes in the country, which seemed at once to herald and ensure his return to power. Lord John was full of enthusiasm. "I would not write in the midst of all your triumphant labours"—thus runs his letter of 25th November 1873, dated from Fawley,—"and in this out-of-the-way spot it is only to-day that I have been able to read the Saturday speech.[1] I doubt whether even

[1] The Saturday speech was delivered to the Conservatives of Glasgow, and was chiefly in defence of the letter which Disraeli

in the great days of '45, '46, you ever achieved such a week's success. One triumph after another! It must require all your philosophy to resist the intoxication of such moments and such successes. The vindication of the Bath letter was perfect, and I cannot doubt that the effect of the series of orations will be felt at the next election. The English of the inaugural Address [1] especially charmed me. . . . No Percy ever returned from across the Border with so many captives as you will carry to 'merrie Carlisle' in your railway carriage on Friday—the hearts of thousands of Scotchmen."

This letter has that hint of extravagant applause which Disraeli knew how to put into letters of his own, and which he highly appreciated in the letters of his friends. In truth, he delighted in Lord John's letters as he delighted in the letters of few others.

had written in support of Lord Grey de Wilton, candidate for Bath. It was a fierce, fighting letter, and worthy remembrance. "For nearly five years," wrote Disraeli, "the present Ministers have harassed trade, worried every profession, and assailed or menaced every class, institution, and species of property in the country. Occasionally they have varied this state of civil warfare by perpetrating some job which outraged public opinion or by stumbling into mistakes which have always been discreditable and sometimes ruinous. All this they call a policy, and seem quite proud of it; but the country has, I think, made up its mind to close this career of plundering and blundering." Thus was the victory of the Conservatives prepared.

[1] This is the address which Disraeli delivered on 19th November 1873, on his installation as Lord Rector of the University of Glasgow. He preached to the undergraduates on the texts of self-knowledge and knowledge of the spirit of the age.

GATHORNE HARDY.

The first Earl of Cranbrook.

(From a mezzotint after a painting by F. Holl.)

Again and again he thanks him for his constancy in writing, and twice, for instance, in the last year of his life he repeated the thanks which he owed his friend and colleague for bringing him the news. "I am greatly obliged," he wrote on 21st July 1880, "for your letters. You must not suppose they are not appreciated because I don't trouble you with answers, but I am not a letter-writer, though I love to hear from my friends." And again on 10th November of the same year he wrote: "Your letters are ever very welcome; for you not only tell me something, but you tell it well." That Disraeli should confess himself no letter-writer was a piece of superfluous modesty—he who never put pen to paper save with a certain artistry, but his gratitude to his friend is evident and sincere.

It is characteristic of Lord John, as I have said, that the colleagues with whom he was in close relation became his friends. His acquaintance with Gathorne Hardy, for instance, had by this time grown into a familiar intimacy. Now Gathorne Hardy was a man after his own heart. Though he had begun his political life, like many another, with a profound distrust of Disraeli, unprepared to put faith in a character which he did not yet understand, he had become one of his loyalest supporters. Not for nothing did Disraeli call him his "sword-arm." A stout Tory, he was always vigorous in speech, especially in attack, and an honesty of purpose bade him not to spare his opponents, or even his friends, when he was not in

agreement with them, as, for instance, when he supported Mr Gladstone's opposition to the Archbishop's Bill in 1874. His opinions for the most part chimed with Lord John's. A High Churchman and a patriot, he never shrank from the bold course; and while he was at the War Office, where especially he distinguished himself, he was always ready to send a force over sea wherever he thought it was needed. He was from first to last bitterly opposed to the disestablishment of the Irish Church, and as soon as Mr Gladstone sketched his measure of destruction, he denounced it as "sacrilege." When the Disestablishment Bill was brought into the House, he assaulted it bitterly, and by his energy and dialectical skill made what atonement he could for Disraeli's failure and Derby's lukewarmness.

His loyalty to his colleagues was unquestioned throughout his career, and once upon a time, when in 1876 Disraeli went to the House of Lords, it was put to a severe test. It seemed as though the leadership of the House of Commons, which in Disraeli's absence he had already led, belonged to Gathorne Hardy as by right. Disraeli chose Northcote, and put his choice upon the ground that Gathorne Hardy was needed at the War Office, which he could hardly control at the same time that he managed the House of Commons. The truer cause, which Disraeli's friendship and tact forbade him to mention, was that Gathorne Hardy's bold overmastering spirit was not apt for the delicate task of

leadership, where conciliation is at least as important as courage. It was Gathorne Hardy's intransigence that made Disraeli hesitate. In 1878, two years later than the episode of the leadership, Disraeli said of Hardy: "Considering his somewhat peppery disposition, I fear he may 'flare up in the inside,' as our friend Bismarck phrases it." Whatever it was that decided the choice of Northcote, Gathorne Hardy felt but a momentary disappointment, and supported the new leader with the same loyalty wherewith he had supported the old. Such was the man—bold, selfless, indefatigable—who became and remained to the end the staunch friend of John Manners.

In 1874 Gladstone suddenly resigned—on 26th January—without consulting his colleagues or uttering a word of warning to his opponents, and Disraeli became once more Prime Minister. His Government, speedily formed, was strong and homogeneous.[1] Lord John received his orders on 19th February

[1] Thus was the Cabinet composed:—

First Lord of the Treasury .	B. Disraeli.
Lord Chancellor . . .	Lord Cairns.
Lord President . . .	The Duke of Richmond.
Lord Privy Seal . . .	Earl of Malmesbury.
Home Secretary . . .	Richard A. Cross.
Foreign Secretary . . .	Earl of Derby.
Colonial Secretary . . .	Earl of Carnarvon.
War Secretary . . .	Gathorne Hardy.
Indian Secretary . . .	Marquis of Salisbury.
Chancellor of the Exchequer .	Sir Stafford Northcote.
First Lord of the Admiralty .	G. Ward Hunt.
Postmaster-General . .	Lord John Manners.

1874. "My dear John," wrote Disraeli from Whitehall Gardens, "it is not agreeable always to find oneself in the same office, and I therefore have recommended the Queen to appoint you her Postmaster-General. It is a highly important post, and daily increasing in importance, but I have confidence, from experience, that you will fulfil its duties with advantage to the country and credit to yourself.—Yours sincerely, D. You will be apprised that we go to Windsor on Saturday." That Disraeli's confidence was not displaced became soon evident. Lord John showed himself a master of business, and by his tact and delicacy attached his staff at the Post Office securely to him. In the management of men he never failed, and his inborn sympathy with others made it easy for him to control the not always docile letter-carriers. There were at times threats of strikes and agitations from outside, with all of which Lord John dealt in a spirit of firm conciliation. "They are not to screw down the wages of these valuable and trustworthy servants," said he, "to the lowest possible point. Nor, on the other hand, should they allow themselves to be led away by a cheap philanthropy to offer wages out of character with the work which the letter-carriers have to perform." Indeed, he approached no question from the point of view of the philanthropist. He was engrossed not by a foolish idealism, but by the advantage of the department. He took great interest in the Savings Bank, and was the first to admit women into its service. This he did to find employment for gentle-

women. Fawcett threw the office open to all. One who served under him at the Post Office celebrates his good nature, and the great consideration he had for others. "When he was there," says he, "there was always peace." Though he did not appear to work hard, he got through a vast deal, because he never busied himself with unessential things. The problems which he was asked to solve in the House were problems of detail, which he dealt with as they came up smoothly and rapidly—the registration of letters, postal facilities in Mayo, telegraphic communication with the Channel Islands. If in deciding such matters as these there is small scope for statesmanship, they give every opportunity to the wise administrator; and though Lord John confessed to Disraeli that he was rather "apprehensive of the future," by common consent he acquitted him excellently.

He took his turn as Minister in Attendance at Balmoral, a duty which the amiability of the Queen made light indeed. "We live under a delightful despot," wrote Disraeli on 2nd May 1874, "who tells me in her letter this morning that 'all her Ministers are agreeable to her!'" The accounts which Lord John gives of the life at Balmoral differ not greatly from those of other Ministers. "In the afternoon I had an audience," he writes to Granby, 26th May 1875; "rather a stiff affair, as she sat at a small card-table with nothing but the prince's portrait upon it, and I stood in front like a boy being

examined by his Schoolmistress. She was, however, very gracious."

A year later, 7th June 1876, he sends to Lady John a more intimate and lively account. "I am as stiff as an old post-horse this morning," says he, "after last night's exertion. We began dancing at six, and by half-past seven I had accomplished one reel, one country dance, and a Houlakin. Then we dressed and dined, and at nine returned to the tent, where the fun became more fast and furious, the performers having supped in the interval. The Queen danced two reels, in one of which I was her *vis-à-vis* with the Princess Beatrice; it was really astonishing the grace and agility she displayed. She said, 'I remember dancing with you, Lord John, years ago; where was it?' 'At Buckingham Palace, Ma'am,' said I, 'and I had to throw over the Princess Mary.' . . . It was nearly half-past twelve before we left. John Brown was Master of the Ceremonies, and was pleased to compliment me on my performance. My private impression is that he had taken quite as much as was good for him." The next day arrived the King of the Belgians. "The Bagpipes are groaning under my window in honour of the advent of the King of the Belgians," wrote Lord John. "I start up, and look out, and witness simultaneously the arrival of the King in an open carriage and four, and the capsizing of the unfortunate outrider, whose horse, alarmed at the music, makes a demivolt, unhorses its rider, and careers wildly over the lawn—

outrider picks himself up, and sets off in chase." When next he went to Balmoral it was in the midst of the Eastern Question, and the news which he sent thence was far graver and more serious.

Meanwhile, on 3rd November 1875, he received a letter from Disraeli, which, as he said, "surprised and shattered him." It is easy to imagine his dismay. Here he was, a tried and faithful Minister, trusting others, distrustful of himself, valuable in council and strongly averse from leadership, and he was offered in terms which must have gratified his pride and ambition one of the highest offices which the Crown can bestow upon mortal man. He was asked, in brief, to exchange the Post-office for India, the petty cares of a distributor of letters for the governance of an Eastern Empire. And the worth of the compliment was enhanced by the warmth of the language which expressed it. "My dear John"—thus wrote Disraeli on 1st November 1875,—"Lord Northbrook has resigned the V.-Royalty of India, and will return in the early Spring. I wish to have your permission to submit your name to the Queen as his successor. It is a great sacrifice to me to lose a valued colleague and my oldest and dearest friend, but I act in this, as I hope in all things, from a sense of duty. India requires a Statesman for its governor as much now as at any period of its modern history. The condition of affairs in Central Asia is critical. It requires also a statesman who possesses my entire confidence. With you at Calcutta and Salisbury in Downing St., I shall feel

that I have colleagues who will work with my views, and be equal to the occasion. I earnestly trust, therefore, that you will assent to my proposal. In doing so, you will deserve well of your country, and may build up an imperishable name. — Yours ever, D."

The most of men, thoughtful only of their own careers, would have grasped such a chance as this with both hands. They would not have cared whether or not they were fit to carry so heavy a burden. For them it would have been enough that they had climbed higher than others, and they would have left success (or failure) to the hazard of time. It was not in this cheerful spirit that Lord John envisaged public affairs. He set country always before self, and asked, in moments of uncertainty, not whether it would profit him to accept this or that post, but whether his acceptance was the best way in which he could serve the cause of Empire. So great was his diffidence that he could not respond easily to the great trust that Disraeli, an acute judge of men and no lover of favouritism, reposed in him. His answer was characteristic. "Had I obeyed the first impulse," said he, "I should have written at once a most grateful but decided no. I felt, however, the issues at stake were too great, the reasons assigned for the offer too serious, and the offer itself such a proof of your confidence and friendship. . . . I cannot express in words how touched I am by the proposal, and by the terms in which it is conveyed." Reflection brought

no change of mind, and Northbrook's successor was not Lord John Manners but Lord Lytton.

One other attempt to promote Lord John, made in February 1877, failed through no fault of his. In that month Disraeli begged him to take the Privy Seal, and intimated to him that the Queen wished him to accept it. "So far as personal and private considerations are concerned," he said, "I am perfectly ready either to take the Privy Seal or remain as I am. I wish therefore the question to be decided by you with exclusive reference to the interest of the Government."[1] Such was his attitude always, and it was only when stress was laid upon the wishes of the Queen that he consented to the change, and asked Disraeli to place his resignation of the office he had the honour to hold

[1] To assist Disraeli in making up his mind, he drew up, with perfect detachment, a list of *pros* and *cons*, for and against Lord Sandon and himself. Thus the document runs :—

Pros.	*Cons.*
1. By taking the Privy Seal I should enable you to retain the present number and constitution of the Cabinet.	1. By my remaining Postmaster-General you would be able to satisfy completely the Borough feeling by offering the Privy Seal with seat in the Cabinet to Sandon; and,
2. Though held by a Commoner it would be by one of respectable antiquity.	2. You would have at your disposal the considerable post of Vice-President of the Council to offer to another Borough Member should you think fit.
3. You would have at your disposal the best post out of the Cabinet to offer to some influential Borough Member.	
4. Sandon's comparative youth for such an office as Privy Seal.	

It will be observed that there is here no hint of his own wishes, or of the effect which the promotion might have upon his own career. He is concerned only with the Prime Minister's convenience.

in Her Majesty's hands. Then on 12th February came "an unexpected obstacle," which Disraeli promised to speak about when they met. What the obstacle was is not recorded. But Lord John, taking the course which was most convenient, contentedly remained at the Post Office.

Himself disinclined from elevation, he sympathised warmly with the honour paid to others. Among the first whom Disraeli informed when he accepted a peerage was Lord John. "I do not like," said he, on 8th August 1876, "that the oldest and dearest of my friends should hear of any important change in my life from any one but myself, and if you have it is only because that change could not take place without previously conferring with others and they were enjoined scrupulously to leave the communication of the result to myself. That has been doubtful until very recently." And so Disraeli set forth, clearly and frankly, his reasons for leaving the House of Commons. He said in effect that no sooner had the Government extricated itself from its difficulties than he told the Queen that he feared it would not be in his power to carry on Her Majesty's affairs beyond the present session. The reasons for the step he proposed to take were sound and clearly set forth. Knowing the Queen's sensitiveness on constitutional convictions, he did not recommend a successor, but observed that if Her Majesty wished to retain her present advisers, he thought there would be no difficulty in keeping them together. Her Majesty, doubtful of the future, urged

him to continue in his present position and go to the House of Lords. He was unwilling, especially as he had no heir, in the decline of his life to began a new career in another House. The Queen, judging the situation more accurately than he, thought that if he shortened his days by remaining in the Commons another year the same difficulties would then reappear. Thus there was no way out but for him to go to the Upper House. "Now you know, dearest John"—in these words he ended his letter,—"the state of the case, and of the feelings of your old and attached friend."

Lord John's reply to the unwelcome news was simple and written from the heart. "You have acted," he said on 8th August 1876, "in this supreme crisis as you have ever acted in public affairs—rightly, wisely, dutifully. I am confident the Queen, your colleagues, and the country, will appreciate and approve the decision at which you have arrived. God grant that the change to the other House of Parliament may renew your health and strength. Still, while I say and feel all this, I cannot bear to face the future; the change will be so mournful, the conditions of service so altered. The example, however, that you have set shall animate me, and you may count on my rendering loyal service to your viceregent in the Commons." Three days later Disraeli took leave of the House of Commons, and thus the close companionship of the two men who had sat side by side for more than thirty years came to an end.

Though separated, they did not cease to work together for what they thought the good of the Empire.

Meanwhile great events had aroused in the country both controversy and enthusiasm. In the first place, the shares held by the Khedive in the Suez Canal had been purchased by the Government. It is a twice-told tale how Frederick Greenwood met Henry Oppenheim at a dinner-party, and heard from that financier that the Khedive, on the verge of bankruptcy, might be willing to sell the shares which he held in the Suez Canal. Emboldened by this secret intelligence, he went to Lord Derby and set forth to him what an admirable opportunity the Government had to prevent the high-road to the East from falling into the hands of a foreign Power. Derby's tepid approval was changed to warmth by the ardour of Disraeli, whose imagination instantly pictured the possibilities of the future. With amazing speed the bargain was made, the money raised, and the shares in the Canal, which have vastly aided us in the conservation of the Empire, passed into the hands of England. The matter was settled at a Cabinet meeting on 25th November 1875, and Lord John sent a brief account of it to Gathorne Hardy, who was not present. "In case you have not heard what happened, I scribble a line. A telegram had come from Stanton announcing that all negotiations about a loan were at an end, and that the Khedive offered us his shares for four millions, of which one must be paid to him by the 1st of December—the remainder before the end of January.

Rothschild was willing to advance the money, we undertaking to contract with the Khedive (subject to Parliamentary ratification). After some discussion, Cairns was requested to draft a telegram accepting the Khedive's offer, and, so far as I know, we may be by this time—2 P.M.—actually in possession of the shares. I walked from the Cabinet with Disraeli, who was much elated with the result, and who anticipates a good revival of English influence abroad in consequence."

Thus John Manners. Gathorne Hardy received the news not without a certain apprehension. "John Manners," he confided to his diary, "orates about the Cabinet, and says Disraeli is greatly elated at the coup; *primâ facie* it is one, but criticism has got to come." When the criticism came it was harmless enough, and the whole business was transacted in ten days from the time of Frederick Greenwood's dinner on 15th November to the day of the final Cabinet on 25th November. Even M. de Lesseps was satisfied. Brinsley Marlay, Lord John's brother-in-law, met the great man in Paris on 28th November, as Lord John reported to Disraeli. Lesseps appeared enthusiastic at the news of Disraeli's financial *coup-d'état*. He spoke with great good sense, thought the transaction excellent for Egypt, and was far better pleased that so solid a capitalist as England should hold the Canal than a *poignée d'aventuriers* or intriguing states. Thus the *coup* gave satisfaction to either side, and the result has proved how wise was the step taken by Disraeli and his Cabinet.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE EASTERN QUESTION.

WHATEVER hopes the Government may have entertained for a period of quiet legislation were dashed by the sudden reawakening of the Eastern Question, which has seldom slept in peace for long. In the summer of 1875 there was trouble in the Balkans. Bosnia and Herzegovina, encouraged no doubt by Austria, rose in revolt against their Turkish rulers. The event was not commensurate with the results which it produced. Andrassy, desiring to localise the conflict, issued a note to the Powers in December 1875, which was designed to encourage common action, and to check the dangerous consequences which have always followed a discussion of Eastern affairs. This note recommended that the Sultan be advised to establish liberty of religion in the revolted provinces, and carry out reforms through a mixed commission, half Christian and half Mahommedan. The British Government, with little confidence, agreed to the Austrian note; and though it is idle to surmise whether or not it would have had a useful

effect, Mr Gladstone made disaster certain by a hasty denunciation of what he called "Bulgarian Atrocities." "Peace was almost settled," wrote Beaconsfield to Lord John Manners in an undated letter, "when the cry of 'Bulgarian Atrocities' was got up by Gladstone." He appealed from the men who had a knowledge of the situation to the mob without, which knew not the meaning of atrocities, and was profoundly ignorant where and what Bulgaria was. Thus he weakened immeasurably the hands of the Government, and did his best to help Russia in her sinister project of turning events to her own advantage. The facts need not have been in dispute. Although Mr Gladstone and the journalists shamelessly exaggerated the savagery of the Turks, a savagery which was not unprovoked, Mr Baring's report proved that the Turks were not quite guiltless, and Lord Derby addressed to them a lofty reprimand. Unhappily, Mr Gladstone had changed what might have been a simple situation to a monstrous melodrama: he had made a crisis, which might have been controlled, unmanageable; and it was not his fault that we were not rushed into a bloody unnecessary war.

For three years Europe remained in a state of vague misunderstood revolution. The issue was never clearly defined. England spoke with two voices, and halved her influence. Mr Gladstone and his friends would have declared war upon Turkey without more ado. Russia, emboldened by the support of the Radical leader, suggested, through Schouvaloff, her Ambas-

sador, that she should forthwith occupy Bulgaria, that Austria should hold Bosnia, and that the united fleets of the Allies should enter the Bosphorus. Beaconsfield, rightly enough, accepted this as a challenge, and at the Mansion House on 9th November 1876 took the challenge up. "In a righteous cause," said he, "and I trust that England will never embark in war except in a righteous cause—a cause that concerns her liberty, her independence, or her empire, England is not a country which will have to inquire whether she would enter into a second or a third campaign."

The Czar was defiant, and in spite of conferences, notes, and arguments, declared war upon Turkey on 24th April 1877. The Turks made a gallant fight of it, and were at last defeated. Beaconsfield proclaimed, again at the Mansion House, in November 1877 that the independence of Turkey was no longer in doubt, and in the Queen's Speech of January 1878 it was plainly set forth that "should hostilities be unfortunately prolonged, some unexpected occurrence may render it incumbent on us to adopt measures of precaution." Two months later the Treaty of San Stefano was signed, and it was proposed to hold a congress at Berlin, on the ground that the Treaty must be committed to the collective revision of Europe, lest it should conflict with other Treaties. Russia refused to accept this plan, and once more we were poised on the edge of war. In the end prudence triumphed. The Congress was held at Berlin,

Bismarck supported Beaconsfield—"der Alte Jude," said he, "das ist der Mann,"—who brought "Peace with Honour" back to England, having pledged us to defend the Asiatic dominions of the Ottoman Empire by force of arms, and having won for us the possession of Cyprus in return for an annual tribute.

The dispute was confused, and, as we look back upon it, seems superfluous. The real issue, whether England or Russia should dominate the East, was sedulously concealed. All were at cross purposes. England had not made up her mind, if there were war, which was her enemy—Turkey or Russia. Both parties of the State were divided. Mr Gladstone could rely upon the firm support of none save the Duke of Argyll. The policy of the Conservatives shifted from month to month, because the Cabinet itself was seldom united for long. If Derby ever framed any opinion in his mind, other than a vague belief in peace at any price, he was always ready to remould it. On 3rd November 1877, Beaconsfield, writing to the Queen, confessed, with a touch of irony, that in a Cabinet of twelve there were seven parties. The first was "the War Party pure and simple," said he, "which is of opinion that the time has arrived when material assistance should be afforded to the Porte. This party is headed by Mr Secretary Hardy, supported by Lord John Manners, Sir M. Beach, and, before his untimely end, by the late First Lord of the Admiralty, Mr Ward Hunt." [1]

[1] See Buckle's 'Life of Disraeli,' vol. vi. p. 194.

Lord John Manners, indeed was one of the few who never wavered. He was resolute from beginning to end in his opposition to Russia. He seems a fixed point in a shifting changing world. Beaconsfield again and again bore testimony to his stedfastness. "It is a source of great satisfaction to me," he writes to Lord John on 7th June 1876, "that you are with the Queen at this trying moment. It is of the last importance that H.M. should have with her a trusty counsellor and a man of the world, and one who possesses my entire confidence." When in the crisis of 14th December 1879, Beaconsfield "proposed that Her Majesty should be advised to summon Parliament immediately, and that a considerable increase of your Majesty's forces should be proposed," it was Lord John who stood by his leader in the Cabinet. No previous intimation to any one had been given of these proposals; and when they had been made there was a dead silence, broken at last by Lord John Manners, who supported them with much energy and ability. Nor did he fail when Lord Carnarvon resigned a few weeks later. "Except brave John Manners and haughty Sir Michael," wrote Beaconsfield to the Queen in January 1878, "Lord Beaconsfield believes that all his colleagues are on their knees to Lord Carnarvon to stay. The Cabinet wants a little of Your Majesty's fire." [1]

Lord John found small agreement with his views even among his colleagues. When it was his duty

[1] See Buckle's 'Life of Disraeli,' vol. vi. p. 215.

to make a speech at Edinburgh in October 1876, he wrote to Lord Derby for advice, and he cannot have been comforted or enlightened by the "hints," as Lord John docketed them, which that statesman gave him. "Don't attack Russia," wrote Lord Derby from the ironical safety of his fence. "We are working together. Don't express confidence in Russia. There is no room for it. Don't give the least colour for the Liberal cry that our policy has been altered by Gladstone's letters and speeches. Nothing is further from the truth. If you are pressed about Bulgarian atrocities, you may hint at Russian doings in the same line—but that is a topic to be delicately handled." There is not much help for a speaker anxious not to embarrass a Foreign Secretary. With a certain cynicism, Derby "wished him well through it." He refrained from making his passage any easier, and was content to give his anxious colleague the familiar representation of a puzzled statesman doing his best to look both ways at once.

Not even the Queen herself, resolute as she was, seemed to keep always in the strait path. When he was at Balmoral in September 1876, Lord John found her determined to pursue a spirited policy. On 12th October the Queen wishes him to ask Derby "whether he thinks it would be right and wise, in the event of the six months' armistice being agreed to, that Russia should be invited to cease pouring officers and men into Servia." She had a natural fear lest, if that process went on, peace should not be the result of the

armistice, and lest, with the coming of spring, a veritable Russian Army might invade Turkey from Servia.[1] A few days later "the rejection of the five months' Armistice by Russia," wrote Lord John to his wife, "is very serious, and will probably lead to War on a gigantic scale. Princess Alice told me that the younger race in Germany are eager to break with Russia. Bismarck, of course, knows this; and it is just possible that if Germany, Austria, and England remain firm the crisis may end peaceably." Whatever Germany thought, and Germany was not without influence, the Queen was then determined that Russia should not lessen our prestige in the East. On 3rd June 1878, Lord John is less easy in his mind concerning the attitude of the Queen. He writes from Balmoral again—this time to Gathorne Hardy—without confidence. "Your letter was most welcome and useful," he says, "for H.M. is very rusty about the Eastern question, wants the Fleet to be removed

[1] Lord Derby's reply, dated 13th October, shows how uncertain was the future, and how vain were all attempts to settle the problem. "It will be only just and quite right," he wrote, "that Russia should be requested, in the event of six months' armistice being accepted, to cease sending volunteers into Servia. Indeed, what is now being done in that respect is a flagrant violation of international law. But I fear there will be trouble in getting the armistice accepted. It is clear to me that the Czar and his advisers are disappointed at what she asked for being granted. They wanted a refusal, as pretext for an occupation. Schouvaloff is pressing his chief to accept, but did not conceal from me in conversation yesterday that the first impression at Sundia had been unfavourable."

from Besika Bay, and an ostentatious Peace policy to be adopted. Ponsonby and I do what we can to keep her straight, and as every day brings some fresh proof of the soundness of our line of action, I daresay she will soon become reconciled to it. She is no doubt worked upon by her German and Russian relatives." Her indecision lasted but a moment, and Lord John was presently able to reassure her.

For himself, as I have said, he never wavered. In his eyes Russia was the enemy, then and always. Nor were his strongly held views contradicted by the event. As early as 10th May 1875 he had told Gathorne Hardy that he would feel happier about the maintenance of peace if Germany were assured that England was prepared at a fortnight's notice to send 40,000 men and an overpowering Fleet to any part of the Continental coast. He still deplored, as I have said, the weakness of our action in the Danish crisis, which, he thought, had permanently impaired our prestige. In September 1876 he deplored also the madness of the country, excited by the inflammatory language of Mr Gladstone, and feared the effect which that demagogue's rhetoric might have in St Petersburg. "Derby's declaration to Elliot," he writes to Disraeli on 29th August, "that if Russia attacked Turkey, we should not interfere, having unluckily got wind, Russia may be tempted to act upon it, and the circumstances and the end of a war so commenced no one can predict. My own belief is that Turkey, left to her own resources, would make a much better

fight of it than most people here anticipate, and I conclude with her maritime supremacy in the Black Sea she would not, as we did, spare Odessa. But what a prospect! I hope you will not, in deference to this outcry, withdraw the Fleet from Besika Bay."

He kept always in his mind what would happen if Russia declared war. That was the problem which overshadowed all the intrigues, all the threats of resignation, all the divisions in the Cabinet. One day he urges Beaconsfield to detach Montenegro from the unholy Alliance (17th October 1876). He thought that the Bath or a Consul-General or some other little compliment might achieve the end. And peace with Montenegro might be worth 100,000 men to Turkey—enough to turn the flank of Russia. "At least," said he, "so it appears to me, wandering solitarily in these faded sylvan groves." Another day (22nd April 1877, two days before Russia declared war upon Turkey) he suggests that we should offer mediation under the 8th Article. If Russia accepted, we should hold the key of the position; if she refused, she would place herself clearly in the wrong. Russia, of course, went to war, and by the beginning of July 1877 threatened to occupy Constantinople. Thus was reached the real crisis. Beaconsfield, with whom the Queen was in perfect agreement, would have sent an ultimatum to Russia, forbidding her to enter the Turkish capital. Derby refused to stir hand or foot unless British interests were threatened, and in the Cabinet Beaconsfield could command the

support only of Lord John and Hicks-Beach. Meanwhile, though he took no decisive step lest he should lose all his colleagues save the trusted two, he looked wisely ahead, and made such plans as were possible.

Lord John, being at Balmoral, asked some pertinent questions of Admiral Commerell, and reported the answers to Beaconsfield. "At the Ball last night," he wrote on 12th July 1877, "I had an opportunity of putting some questions to Admiral Commerell. He answered them thoughtfully and with precision. In his opinion the Fleet at Constantinople would be able to render valuable fighting assistance to the defence of the city. A body of 5000 Blue Jackets and Marines could be sent ashore, forming a highly disciplined and most effective force of artillerists, who could by themselves maintain a defensive position for a considerable time against a hostile movement. But important as would be the material assistance so rendered by the ships and by that detached force, he estimates far higher the moral effect produced by the presence of the Fleet at Constantinople."

Thus one danger was foreseen and provided against. But the Government still moved slowly, hoping that something would turn up. On 21st July a definite decision was arrived at. Beaconsfield, in writing to the Queen, assured her that "in the most formal, and even solemn, manner, the question was placed before the Cabinet, what they were prepared to do if Russia occupied Constantinople? They unanimously agreed, no one stronger and more decided than

Lord Salisbury, that the Cabinet should advise Your Majesty to declare war against Russia." [1] The decision of the Cabinet did not satisfy Lord John, and he resigned. "My dear Friend," he wrote from Hemsted Park on 22nd July 1877, "with a heavy heart, but with no misgivings as to the necessity of the course I am taking, I am compelled by the decision at which the Cabinet arrived yesterday to place my resignation in your hands, and to ask you to request Her Majesty to be pleased to accept it at such time and in such manner as shall seem to you least inconvenient to her service, and least hurtful to the Government. I need say nothing of the reasons which force me to this step, nor of the pain it occasions me. You will understand both. I had confidently hoped to remain by your side, and to render what little assistance it was in my power to the close of your administration; but it was not to be. Yours in all truth and loyalty, John Manners." Beaconsfield, acknowledging "the great blow to him and most unexpected," confessed that he did not exactly understand what decision of the Cabinet Lord John referred to. "I must beg you," he said, "at all events to keep your resignation secret, until I can communicate it to the Queen personally, as a written announcement would lead to much excitement. Her Majesty, of all my colleagues, most depended on your supporting me, and now, when for the first time her Cabinet has unanimously and heartily agreed to declare war against Russia if she evinces the slightest

[1] See Buckle's 'Life of Disraeli,' vol. vi. p. 155.

intention to fortify or remain in Constantinople (if she ever get there), the Queen will be greatly distressed and surprised at your determination."

Lord John was still dissatisfied, and with some reason, as readers of Mr Buckle's 'Life of Disraeli' will discover for themselves. Though a denial was given on 26th July 1877 by Derby and Count Beust to the alarming assertion, said to have been made by Derby to Beust, that we did not object to the temporary occupation by the Russians of Constantinople, Derby, two days later, informed the Queen that it would be too late to occupy Gallipoli, even if it were desirable. It is evident, therefore, that Lord John had solid ground for his objection. The Cabinet was obviously divided, and the best solace which Beaconsfield could give the Queen was that "if war is necessary he will not shrink from advising your Majesty to declare it, and, in that case he very much doubts whether Lord Derby, with all his savage and sullen expressions, will resign." [1]

On 24th July, Lord John had, meanwhile, justified his own action in a lucid and fearless letter, which proves that the Ministers were still at cross purposes, and that the decision of the Cabinet on 21st July was not clear, at any rate to one of its members.[2]

[1] See Buckle's 'Life of Disraeli,' vol. vi. p. 158.

[2] Here is Lord John's justification of his action, which, taken with Lord Derby's admission that it was too late to occupy Constantinople, is ample and unanswerable: "My dear B., I have not said a word to anybody on the subject of my communication to you, and will refrain from doing so

How to explain the discrepancies I do not know, but it is impossible to doubt Lord John's sincerity. And when the problem was solved presently, it was solved not by argument but by the course of events. The gallant defence of Plevna put Russia's occupation of Constantinople far into the future, and Lord John's resignation, unaccepted, fell into the pit of forgotten things. Only one reference to it he permitted himself later. On 17th December 1877 he wrote to Beaconsfield: "If you think it would be the slightest use in referring to my tendering resigna-

until I hear from you again. The decision of the Cabinet which has forced me to leave it, is that which allows Russia to occupy Constantinople and Gallipoli. I am not aware of any decision to go to war with her afterwards, nor do I believe that any such intention, if it exists now, would or could be carried into effect then. The occupation of Constantinople is, in my judgment, the destruction of Turkey and the establishment of Russian supremacy in the East, and I cannot support a policy which produces such results. That Russia may never reach Contantinople is very likely, but would it be fair or honourable in me to speculate on that possibility and reserve my dissent and my resignation until the crisis had arrived? I cannot think so. As soon therefore as I was distinctly informed that the settled policy of the Cabinet was to permit the Russian occupation of Constantinople and Gallipoli, I felt that in honour and fairness I was bound to retire. I leave it entirely to you to settle the time and mode of making this known to the Queen and my colleagues, and will attend, or not attend, the next Cabinet as you think best. Nothing can ever alter the feelings I entertain towards you, and I shall step back into private life with only an increased admiration of your great qualities and character. The Queen will, I hardly venture to hope, pardon me the step I am taking for the motive which prompts it."

tion last summer in conversation with Derby, or in the Cabinet, don't hesitate to do so."

Nevertheless, no settlement was in sight, and the discussion between Beaconsfield and Lord John went wearily on. Nor was Constantinople itself as yet safe. Beaconsfield held it to be of the utmost importance that there should be no second campaign, the inevitable object of which would be the seizure of Constantinople. "I would propose," he wrote on 28th September 1877 to Lord John from Hughenden, "that the Queen's Ambassador should sound the Porte as to what terms of peace it would offer. There is reason to believe that the Porte would consent to our administration of Bulgaria founded on the Protocol of London, and to the restoration to Russia of the portion of Bessarabia forfeited by the Treaty of Paris. These concessions ought to satisfy the honour of Russia." He held that the Porte would accept these or any other reasonable terms, if only England, as Mediator, would assure the Porte that, were they rejected, she would quit her position of neutrality, and make it plain to Russia that if she menaced Constantinople we would give material assistance to Turkey. That, he thought, was "a clear and precise policy," which would put Russia, if she did not accept it, still further in the wrong in the eyes of Europe, and which might lead to peace. With this policy Lord John cordially agreed, and promised to support it in the Cabinet. But by this time he was unduly optimistic, and held that even a second campaign would

not result in the seizure of Constantinople by the Russians. "My belief," said he, with the faith in the Turks which had been his ever since the days of David Urquhart, "that so long as Turkey retains her naval superiority, Constantinople is safe." And the meeting of the Cabinet was wholly agreeable to him. "You have, I think," thus he wrote on 8th October 1877, "reason to be satisfied with the general result of yesterday's Cabinet. The only recalcitrant was Carnarvon, for, although Salisbury kicked at last, his final suggestion that Russia should be called upon to give absolute pledge about Constantinople, and that, if she refused, we should act as we thought fit, really conceded the main point."

So far, the prospect in the East had been gloomy enough to depress the sanguine, and there was no unanimity in the Cabinet to lift the depression. Yet Beaconsfield, supported by the more zealous of his colleagues, was emboldened, as I have said, to declare at the Lord Mayor's banquet of 1877 that "the independence of Turkey was no longer in doubt," and to threaten in the Queen's Speech at the beginning of 1878 that "should hostilities be indefinitely prolonged, some unexpected occurrence might render it incumbent on me to adopt measures of precaution." These measures were adopted on 23rd January; the British fleet was ordered to the Dardanelles; Derby and Carnarvon resigned, though Derby withdrew his resignation when the fleet was ordered back. One other crisis remained to meet. When, before the Congress

of Berlin, Russia objected to the revision of the Treaty of Stefano, saying that she left to the other Powers the liberty of raising "such questions at the Congress as they might think fit to discuss, and reserved to herself the liberty of accepting or not accepting the discussion of these questions," the reserves were called out, and Derby did resign, never to return. Lord John, without rancour, wrote to deplore the secession of his old friend, and received an amiable response from Derby. "Parting from political friends," said the Foreign Secretary, "is always an unpleasant business; but when none except public motives have operated on either side, there need be no lessening of personal regard and respect. If you get through this trouble peacefully, no man in or out of Parliament will more cordially congratulate you than I; and in any case I shall always retain a pleasant recollection of our many years of common action." It may be doubted whether Derby genuinely wished his late colleagues a peaceful way out. At least he did a great deal to hamper them after he had gone. Lord John told the simple facts, afterwards disputed, to Granby. "Derby," he wrote on 28th March 1878, "determined upon resignation when we came to the decision, in consequence of the collapse of the Congress, to call out the Army Reserve. No doubt for some time his position has been a difficult one, and his health much shaken. Salisbury will take his place." The change from Derby to Salisbury had an immediate effect. The Russians submitted their case to the Congress

of Berlin, and Beaconsfield and Salisbury returned bringing "peace with honour." Beaconsfield declined a dukedom, and was given (with Salisbury) the Garter. "I can't let this day pass," wrote Lord John on 23rd July 1878, "without sending you a line of intense gratification at yesterday's ceremonial, when—

> "'St George beheld thee with delight,
> Vouchsafe to be an azure knight.'"

And the future of England and of the Tory Party seemed assured.

Beaconsfield's conduct of the English case at Berlin was duly arraigned in the House of Commons, and gallantly vindicated by his friends. Lord John, answering Mr Lowe, who promised to make a disagreeable speech and faithfully kept his word, had no difficulty in defending both the guarantee given to Turkey in Asia and the occupation of Cyprus. The Conservative majority against what was practically a vote of censure was entirely satisfactory, and it is not surprising that Cranbrook was elated.[1] "What a triumph for us," he wrote on 3rd August 1878, "whose real working majority is 52! Sandon, John Manners, and Cross have done admirably." But the reaction was not long deferred. Parties, like men, cannot long remain at their zenith, and "Peace with Honour" encountered a not unnatural check. The country, tired of singing the praises of

[1] See 'Gathorne Hardy, First Earl of Cranbrook,' vol. ii. p. 77.

its favourites, soon grew tired of them, and "farewell went out sighing." Beaconsfield behaved with a proper dignity, and did not take advantage of a present glory to dissolve Parliament, and ensure to himself and his party another period of office. Thenceforward ill-luck dogged the footsteps of the Conservatives—in Zululand, in Afghanistan, and elsewhere. And Mr Gladstone's Midlothian campaign, which opened the road back to the leadership which he had renounced, had a baleful effect upon the country.[1]

The end came in March, when Parliament was dissolved, and the writs were issued for a General Election. John Manners earned the reward which his long service had merited, and he confided to a note-book the pleasure he took in the distinctions showered upon him. "At the end of April"—thus he wrote—"we resigned office, and I now jot down one or two particulars affecting myself. I opposed the Easter Dissolution, though I did not foresee its fatal result. After our resignation was resolved on, I called on Beaconsfield, who at once informed me of his intention to offer me the G.C.B., and to make Cochrane a Peer; he then suggested my asking for a pension. This, after some consideration, I did.

[1] Beaconsfield's disgust at Gladstone's violent tone was set forth in a brief letter to Cranbrook. (See 'Gathorne Hardy,' vol. ii. p. 126.) "It certainly is a relief," he wrote on 10th December 1879, "that the drenching rhetoric has at length ceased—but I have never read a word of it. '*Satis eloquentiæ, sapientiæ parum.*'—Yrs. B."

On 20th April, James Daly met me at the Paddington Station on my way to Windsor to receive the Bath with the news that the pension was granted; so that on that day I felt my long political career was closed—and closed in a manner at least commensurate with its deserts. In addition to the pension of £1200 a year and the G.C.B., there came the same evening a letter from the Queen couched in the most kind and gratifying terms, accompanying the last volume of the Prince's 'Life.' Here therefore I pause: 40 years, save one, of political life are brought to a close with honour and pecuniary reward, and I have been permitted to see many objects, which as a very young man I had set before me, obtained, and to some slight extent, through my own exertions. *Laus Deo.*" And as he returned to London, honoured and rewarded, he thought, surely, that it was a reward for Young England, the party from which Beaconsfield, for six years an omnipotent minister, Cochrane, now a peer, and himself, with the Grand Cross of the Bath, had emerged many a long year before. Only one of the leaders of that gallant adventure had fallen by the way, George Smythe, the happy inspirer of them all three, and their satisfaction was tempered by an old regret.

He welcomed the G.C.B. without reserve. He did not so easily make up his mind to accept the pension. According to his wont, he discussed his doubts with his brother. "I have just returned with my red riband and star from Windsor," he wrote on 20th

April 1880. "In giving me her hand to kiss, the Queen gave me proof that it was not a mere form I was going through, but that she was pleased at what was being done. Her kindness to me all along has been great. This morning I received information that I am to receive a retiring pension of £1200 a year. In view of my long Parliamentary career and my large family, I felt I ought to put aside scruple and not decline that addition to my income which the State could give. There was no time to consult you or anybody on the subject—I had to act almost on the spur of the moment." It was a great relief to him to hear that his brother approved his action. "I was greatly pleased," he wrote to the Duke of Rutland on 22nd April 1880, "to receive your affectionate letter, and to know that you thought I acted rightly in taking the pension. There is a feeling that I can't help sharing against becoming a State pensioner; but I thought it my duty to consider wife and children in preference." Thus came to an end Lord John's tenure of office in Beaconsfield's famous Government. It was by no means the close, as he thought, of his political career.

It is not possible to look back with pride or satisfaction to the Government of Mr Gladstone which followed. The Cabinet itself, if strong, was never homogeneous. It sowed the seeds at once of weakness and tergiversation, and it reaped a harvest of scandal and disaster. The name of Great Britain stood high when Lord Beaconsfield laid down the

reins. Mr Gladstone had not long taken them up when we fell in repute all the world over. How should our Ministers be respected at home or abroad when they lacked always courage and resolution? They knew as little how to deal with Bradlaugh as with Parnell. A show of strength on their part was followed always by surrender. While Bradlaugh brawled in the House, Parnell encouraged murder and outrage in Ireland. In South Africa we attacked Majuba Hill, and gave it up irresolutely. When Lord Roberts had relieved Kandahar in August 1880, he was ordered five months later to evacuate it. There seemed security nowhere in the Empire. The Government itself creaked and tottered, and, like other things that creak and totter, it held feverishly on to the life which it counterfeited. Lord John, assiduous in attendance at the House and in debate, kept Beaconsfield informed of what went on in the Commons, and eagerly noted the dissension which grew apace among the Ministers. "The mistakes and misfortunes of H.M.'s Ministers," he wrote to his friend on 5th June 1880, "are of nightly occurrence. Last night Gladstone had to intervene twice, and to carry out of the fray enveloped in a cloud of words the mangled bodies, first of Adam, and secondly of Hartington, whose speech (especially the manner of it) on Opium had given dire offence to all emotional Radicals. After that—at 2 in the morning—Parnell made his first direct move in favour of abolishing rent."

So month by month we see how events struck the eye and the mind of an acute observer. On 23rd June John Manners gives Beaconsfield a vivid sketch of Bradlaugh, then a new factor in politics. "He is a tall, straight, broad-shouldered man," he wrote, "with ugly features and a bad expression. He spoke with vigour and a certain dramatic power. His intention is clearly to fight the House to the last. Gladstone abdicated the leadership, and followed Northcote, supporting him throughout. In some form or other I apprehend that Bradlaugh will occupy the rest of the Session." A few days later he returned to the same subject. "The end, if it be the end, of the Bradlaugh incident," said he on 2nd July 1880, "has, I think, strengthened us and weakened the Government in the Country. Gladstone's speech was poor, wire-drawn, and timid. Northcote spoke very well, and hit the blot in Gladstone's case with precision and force. . . . The air is full of ministerial dissensions and impending secessions; but beyond the fact that Hartington is angry and discontented, I doubt whether anything is absolutely known." Again and again he complains of the indifference of the House. "The Government's legislative ship is in the doldrums," he says on 8th July, "and don't make any headway at all; but our barque pitches and rolls uncomfortably, and its crew don't answer to the boatswain's whistle."

Presently he reports that Gladstone is entirely in the hands of Bright and Chamberlain, who treat him

and all the moderate Liberals with entire indifference and contempt, and that Hartington has given up all enterprise. Again he reverts to the inactivity of the Conservatives. "The least satisfactory feature of the present position," he says on 20th July 1880, "is the slack attendance of our friends, which I hear sometimes attributed to their non-appreciation of the calm and gentle spirit in which they are led, sometimes to the manner in which they are whipped." A few months later, 21st November, after conferring with Northcote, he writes: "There would appear to be more disorganisation in our ranks than I was aware of, some twenty or thirty gentlemen proposing to form themselves into a Fifth party! and to act as a connecting link between the front bench and the Fourth party! If there be the slightest foundation for such a statement, it is clear the whipping arrangements acquire fresh importance; after considerable discussion, we could suggest no better new appointment than Sidney Herbert's."

For the Fourth party he had a natural sympathy. He had been a *frondeur* himself in his youth. "Remembering with a certain tenderness what the world was pleased to call 'Young England,'" he wrote on 14th November 1880, "I look upon the Fourth party with less of disfavour than some of our friends do, and do not distress myself about their independent action. Gorst is—in my view—the only dangerous man among them, and I am quite unable even to guess at the motives which guide him." During the

year 1880 the letters of Beaconsfield to Lord John are brief and infrequent. On the one hand, as I have said, he liked to pretend that he was no letter-writer; on the other, he was content to gather news from his friends. On 9th November 1880 he gives his correspondent a hint of his return to London. "I have bought Lord Tankerville's house in Curzon St.—close to Park Lane, where I lived the better half of my life. The lease is not very long —nine years; but when that expires I shall be in the Elysian fields—so that it is as good to me as if it were a freehold." And then on Christmas Eve of the same year, in the secluded loneliness of Hughenden, he wrote what was destined to be the last letter to his old friend which has survived. "My dear John," he said, "I won't let the year die without a sign, tho' it is mockery to talk of merrie Xmases, or even to hope for happy New Years. Old England seems to me to be tumbling to pieces, and every Power seems to feel that now is the opportunity for giving us the last stab. What a Nemesis are Derby's subscription to Boycott and Carnarvon's philippic to Bright, and on the same day! And they left their real friends for this 'great Liberal Party,' which is the shame of England and the contempt of Europe! And yet I see no prospect of salvation, and really believe that you, at least, will live long enough to see the crown fall from our gracious Sovereign's head. Except in Society and in the metropolis, I am told there is no adequate feeling even about

Ireland. The farmers are quite impassive, perhaps secretly sympathising with the rebels. The only portion of the Constituencies, in my opinion, who may be depended on when affairs are riper, are the English working-classes, tho' their influence must be diminished by the Irish Colonies."

Thus wrote Beaconsfield in the gloom induced by solitude and Christmastide. The fit of despondency which inspired this letter was assuredly transitory. It was not consonant with the high courage of Beaconsfield to despair of the Empire. Yet it may well be believed that Lord John's reply brought some comfort to his stricken mind. "Your most kind though melancholy letter reached me yesterday," wrote Lord John, "and I fear my answer to it will not be couched in a much livelier strain. Nevertheless, I will venture an earnest hope that the New Year may bring to you many blessings, and end more prosperously for Old England than its predecessor is like to do. In counting the elements of resistance to a democratic Revolution, I think you a little underrate the power, or rather the will, of the agricultural classes. . . . These classes I believe to be willing to fight for the existing order, if they are fitly encouraged and led, and that 'if' brings me to what I consider to be our real danger, the growing reluctance of the high-born and wealthy to take the lead in and incur the trouble and expense of political life."

Only one later letter from John Manners, written on 25th March 1881, remains. It expresses the

writer's grief at hearing of Beaconsfield's illness, and an anxious hope for a good report. John Manners adds for Beaconsfield's pleasure that his friend, George Hamilton, had made one of the best speeches that ever he heard, "full of point, fire, and argument." The letter was endorsed: "Ansd. and thanked, 26th March /81.—B." A fortnight earlier Lord John had written an ominous letter to Lady Bradford. "How much longer do you remain in your wilderness?" he had asked. "There is a gentleman in Curzon St. who frets at your prolonged absence." On 7th April 1881 he was plainly alarmed. "I have just left Curzon St.," he writes to Lady Bradford, whom he had begged, with success, nearly forty years ago to revise her opinion of Disraeli, "where everything was going on as well as possible. He is really thought not to have lost ground since yesterday; but the spasm early this morning was nearly fatal. I cannot help hoping that his strength and composure will enable him to resist further attacks successfully; but, alas! on how thin a thread that precious life hangs." The thread was thin indeed. In less than a fortnight Beaconsfield was dead.

The death of Lord Beaconsfield brought to an end an unbroken friendship of forty years. No cloud had ever darkened the sky of their mutual attachment. Rarely had they differed on political questions; never for an hour had they been separated by a personal misunderstanding. They had shared the past intimately as few others had shared it. They

had fought side by side since the days of Young England. They had been colleagues in many Cabinets since they both served under Lord Derby in 1852. In a sense, they were complementary one to the other. Disraeli was a born leader of men. He had a natural gift of imposing himself upon others, and moulding them to his will. Lord John preferred the post of staff-officer to that of Commander-in-Chief, and was content to give his leader the firmest support he could in or out of the Cabinet, to admonish him with a gentle persuasiveness if he disagreed with him, to help him with a generous appreciation of such speeches and policies as he approved. The one was best in action, the other in counsel, and it is easy to understand that they were divided neither in thought nor action. Lord John, moreover, born to the influence which then belonged to a few great families, was able in the early years of Disraeli's career to give him efficient help,[1] a help which Disraeli always acknowledged and did his best to reward. There never was a Cabinet framed by Disraeli in which there

[1] A letter from Sir J. P. Hennessey, dated 14th May 1881, is an accidental and conclusive corroboration of the aid willingly given: "Looking back on the last forty years of your friendship, you may comfort yourself with two reflections, that Lord Beaconsfield's affection for you was unrivalled and unbroken, and that none of his political associates (I may as one humble but most devoted follower of his presume to say it) did so much to sustain him in his career as you did. The indirect service you thus rendered your country far exceeded the similar services of Lord George Bentinck and the late Lord Derby.—John Pope Hennessey."

was not a place found for Lord John; there never was a post suitable for Lord John which Disraeli was not eager to offer him, not merely because the two friends were closely knit in the bonds of friendship, but because Disraeli esteemed Lord John's talents far more highly than did Lord John himself. As I have recorded, there are few high offices under the Crown which Lord John, at Disraeli's suggestion, might not have held if he had chosen. If they were apart, they engaged in an intimate correspondence. The first of the many surviving letters which passed between them is dated 1843, the last 1881. Very early in their friendship the formal "Dear Lord John" gave way to "Dear John," and so remained until the end. For Lord John, Disraeli is always "Dear D.," and the warm tone of their letters will be observed by all readers of this book. Their common friends, George Bentinck and George Smythe, were taken from them. They knit their intimacy closer, for the very reason that a common memory was theirs and a common loyalty. There is not recorded in history a nobler political friendship than this, and it is vastly to the credit of both of them that, in a profession like politics, generally tainted by intrigue and self-seeking, they never once fell out nor found a cause for grievance or complaint.

CHAPTER XIV.

EGYPT AND IRELAND.

After he had stood by the grave-side at Hughenden, Lord John was asked, so to say, to build up his life afresh. "I can't apply my mind to anything," he wrote to Lady John, "but our great loss. It seems to me the end of my own active life, and, unlike most sorrows, to be worse in reality than in anticipation." It was not the end of his active life. It did but persuade him to strengthen old ties and to make new ones. Meanwhile a letter written to Queen Victoria on 25th April 1881 is an eloquent proof of his deep affection and sincere regret for the dead statesman. "Lord John Manners, with his humble duty to your Majesty," thus runs the letter, "begs permission to thank the Queen for her gracious inquiries through Lady Ely after Lady John's health, which he is thankful to say is now quite re-established. Lord John hopes to be forgiven by her Majesty if he ventures to avail himself of this opportunity to say that his own personal sorrow for the—as he fears irreparable—loss which the Empire has sustained in

the death of Lord Beaconsfield is enhanced when he thinks of your Majesty's grief at the removal of so justly valued a friend and counsellor. An intimate, personal, and political friendship, extending over near forty years, enables Lord John to estimate in some degree the value of the services which are now lost to the Queen and the Country, and humbly to sympathise with your Majesty in this great affliction. Later on it may be consolatory to your Majesty to know that he died in the fulness of his fame, with his mighty intellect intact and unimpaired, and with will resigned to that of God. In the last private conversation which Lord John had with him—it was on a Sunday—he spoke of the service he had attended that morning at the Chapel Royal, and with praise of the sermon he had heard from Canon Fleming. The admiration and affectionate respect for his memory universally shown by all classes of your Majesty's subjects cannot but be consolatory to those who knew and loved him; but, alas! when all that is possible of a comforting character has been said, how dreary is the blank, how dark the gloom!" This letter is of its time and place; yet through every line of its formality is discerned the true and honest expression of a genuine sorrow.

Though the greatest attachment which bound him to political life was thus snapped, Lord John did not wander aimlessly away from the world of affairs. There was not a little to hold his attention, and he took up the task of criticising the actions of the

Government with all his old energy. The Government, which lasted, under the guidance of Mr Gladstone, from 1880 to 1885, seemed to its critics to be doomed to an early death. It had in it, as I have said, all the seeds of dissolution. It was not agreed even in its ambitions. There were factions in the Cabinet as well as in the House of Commons. Divided at home, the Government was unable to make up its mind upon any questions of foreign policy. Mr Gladstone quarrelled with Bismarck, and brought us to the brink of war with Russia. He met his worst defeats in Ireland and in Egypt. As early as 1881 the Opposition feared that Gladstone would be compelled to renounce his task. A year later Lord John, on 16th July 1882, tells his brother that "after his defeat Gladstone did actually write and despatch to Windsor a letter of resignation, and was persuaded by his colleagues to 'retract it by telegraph.'" In writing to Northcote, he sets the same incident in another light. "Very many thanks," he says, "for yours of the 14th with its interesting historiette of Gladstone's incomplete resignation. What an impulsive madman it is, and how little confidence in or respect for him must be felt by colleagues who describe him as that 'silly old man.'" Lord Salisbury himself began to think that the end was not far off. "The outlook," he wrote to Lord John on 10th December 1882, "as you say, is very obscure. The Government are beginning to talk of their being beaten on the *clôture*, and threatening to dissolve. But I do not

believe in either contingency. They will certainly be great idiots if they dissolve; and if they do, we shall have cause to infer that they are driven to it by some internal differences. Two of their recent proceedings have puzzled me much—their allowing Cairns' Land Bills to pass, which takes away the case for any land legislation; and their leaving two Cabinet offices unfilled. Is the Queen making a fight about Dilke, or is Gladstone persuading himself that he intends to retire?"

Gladstone had no such intention. He went sternly on his way. He passed the Irish Land Act, which, as Lord John, speaking for his party, said, "has complicated the relations between landlord and tenant, without setting them on a permanent basis, and without doing anything to develop the resources of Ireland." This "means of peace," as it was called, was greeted in the customary manner. It was followed by a campaign of murder and assassination, organised by Captain Moonlight, and then, on 6th May 1882, as though to express fully the gratitude of the Irish people for the boon conferred upon them, Mr Burke and Lord Frederick Cavendish were done to death in the Phœnix Park. If the outlook in Ireland was black, the outlook was no brighter in Egypt. To the rebellion of Arabi there had succeeded the rising of the Mahdi and a dangerous outbreak of Moslem fanaticism. The Government, not daring to deal with the insurrection firmly and boldly, hoped that it might win a cheap victory by sending small

and inefficient forces against the Arabs. It was the old story of the bundle of sticks. The Arabs found it an easy matter to untie the bundle, and break the sticks one by one. The Government, losing courage and lacking judgment, listened to the voice of any agitator that chanced to come along. Mr Stead's excited articles, the foolish protests of the Anti-Slavery Society, had more weight with the Ministers than the advice of those who had studied the problem on the spot. They bowed to the storm as the wind blew them—now this way, now that,—and it is not strange that their lack of policy sent many gallant men to their death.

General Hicks and his hastily gathered untrained mob of soldiers were the first victims. They perished in a waterless desert. Then Baker Pasha, obedient against the grain to Gladstone's catchword, "Rescue and retire," failed to relieve Tokar, and the helpless garrison of Sinkat was massacred. At last General Gordon was sent out, in answer to the clamour of the Press, to save the garrisons. He was cheaper than an Army. What he asked was denied him—the collaboration of Zobeir and military support. The rest is known. Whatever was done was done too late, and Gordon, like Hicks and Baker Pasha, was sacrificed ultimately to the inanition of the Government. Lord John spoke on the fourth night (18th February 1884) in support of a vote of censure. "The desire of the House to hear Marriott," he wrote to his brother, the Duke of Rutland, "threw me well towards the dinner

hour yesterday, but a fair audience remained, and I sat down just before 8 o'clock, Gladstone remaining to the last, and sending me a little note of cordial congratulations at the end. That is a very pleasing and gratifying incident of political warfare." Mr Gladstone's conduct was at once wise and magnanimous. Assuredly the speech deserved whatever praise might be given it, nor did it in a single paragraph spare Mr Gladstone. It was as good a debating speech as Lord John ever made, and was acclaimed not only by Mr Gladstone, but by the Speaker himself.

"Now," said Lord John at the outset of his speech, "the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr Marriott), who has just left the House, said that the disaster to General Hicks was foreseen by every one who knew anything of Egypt. But in that he made a slight mistake. There were some who saw and foresaw nothing, for we find in the Speech from the Throne that Her Majesty is made to describe that dreadful catastrophe as an entirely unforeseen one. Unforeseen by whom? Unforeseen by Her Majesty's Ministers. And why? Because they deliberately chose and refused to see and hear what everybody else saw and heard." He complained that the Egyptian Army was not reorganised, that it lacked officers, that it did not exist in any practical sense. Worse still, "the right hon. Gentleman and his Cabinet believe they can reorganise Egypt without thinking of the Soudan." And then, with a mock apology for mentioning General Gordon, he cites him aptly to his purpose. "We

have been told recently," said he, " that we must not say a word about General Gordon, that the whole responsibility rests with him, and that any one who says anything about his Egyptian doings is committing something like a crime. What does General Gordon say about separating the affairs of Egypt from the Soudan? . . . This is what he says: 'If you care for the prosperity and quiet of Lower Egypt, do not be oblivious of what goes on in the Soudan. Lower Egypt may be the head and chest, the Soudan is the belly.' " It is not wonderful that Mr Gladstone and his Cabinet should shrink from the mention of General Gordon's name. They were already afraid of what they had done in sending him to Egypt, and apart from the jeopardy in which they had placed him—a soldier without an army, a workman without his tools—they still doubted the wisdom of the agitation to which they had succumbed.

As to the disaster which befell the hapless General Hicks, Lord John threw the whole responsibility of it upon the Government. Had the Cabinet listened to the wise counsels of Lord Dufferin it might have been averted. Even had Lord Dufferin remained two or three months more in Cairo, General Hicks might have been saved. No sooner had Lord Dufferin departed from Egypt than the Government proceeded upon the course of a total abstinence from responsibility and advice. " It was in vain," said Lord John, " that Hicks Pasha wrote those plaintive and melancholy letters to which reference has been made.

Her Majesty's Government did not look at them. It was nothing to them whether General Hicks and his Army went to their death or not." It was necessary for the sake of the Radical policy that Mr Gladstone should be able "to announce to the startled and disgusted citizens at the Guildhall that the evacuation was about to become an accomplished fact; and so they foresaw nothing, as they have now told us in the Queen's Speech." The same policy, or lack of policy, destroyed the force of Baker Pasha—a force organised to perform duties for which it was not competent, and for which it was not intended. In defence of this wickedness the Government said that, firstly, it had no reason to suppose that Baker Pasha's Army was unequal to the task imposed upon it; and that, secondly, we could not send a real Egyptian Army, because the men composing it were enlisted upon terms which precluded their being sent into the Soudan. The reasons were irrelevant and incompatible, and the second reason was no reason at all, since the Foreign Secretary made a distinction between the geographical and political Soudan, and since nobody knew clearly whether Suakim, Sinkat, and Tokar, which were to be relieved, were then or were now in or out of the Soudan.

Was ever a crueller, more disastrous, muddle made? "Then we are told," thus goes on Lord John, "that the Army which Baker Pasha took with him was one on which reliance could be placed to give a good account of any force which might be opposed to

them; but Baker Pasha's own opinion was that he was marching with them on to certain death: and when he arrived he did not put himself at the head of the demoralised army of blacks and fellaheen, but took steamer at once to Massowah, in order, if possible, to find men upon whom he could better rely than upon the miserable policemen who had been put under his charge for the execution of a difficult and perilous enterprise." The Government washed its hands of the massacre which followed. It could not hurt the dignity of the Khedive by giving him advice. It did inflict its advice upon the Egyptian Government when that Government considered that "Zobeir's services would be very useful in commanding the friendly Bedouins, who were to be sent to Suakim, and in conducting negotiations with the tribes on the Berber-Suakim route and elsewhere." With this proposal Sir Evelyn Baring and Baker Pasha were in agreement. But, as Lord John said, "Lord Granville, who had received a *verbosa et grandis epistola* from the Anti-Slavery Society, yielding to their influence altogether, put aside all these pretences as to the sole responsibility of the Khedive, and interfered vitally with the force by refusing to sanction the appointment of Zobeir Pasha." What the danger in which Baker Pasha and his force stood could not achieve, the letter of the Anti-Slavery Society achieved in the twinkling of an eye; and so Lord John clinched the argument. "How can it be said in these circumstances," he asked, "that there has been no vacilla-

tion or inconsistency on the part of the Government? The fact is that, to use the words of the poet, the consistency of the Government has been constant to a constant change."

So Baker Pasha was sent to encounter certain defeat; and when news came of the defeat, the Government was content to send two ships to Suakim. Then Sinkat fell, and General Gordon was right when he said in a telegram that "the rumour that the British troops are coming would have had more effect than even their actual arrival." The troops neither went nor were heralded. The Ministry sent telegrams to General Gordon which had better have been suppressed. "To ask a man of General Gordon's humane, gallant, and chivalrous nature whether an attempt to relieve a starving and helpless garrison should be put aside lest it should inconvenience his movements or should subject him to personal danger is an insult." So spoke Lord John, whose own chivalrous nature could keenly appreciate the insult offered to General Gordon; and in conclusion he asked: "Will this House, when the Division is called, associate itself with the other House of Parliament in expressing the deliberate opinion and judgment of the country on these lamentable transactions? Will the House, by adopting this course, become, as it ought to become, the organ and mouthpiece of a brave, humane, high-spirited and, therefore, justly indignant people?" Mr Gladstone, as I have said, generously applauded the speech, and the Vote of Censure was lost by only 49 votes.

Then came the news of Gordon's death, which touched the imagination of the people to a profound and universal grief. The tragic end of the great soldier and statesman justified, unhappily, the censure passed on the Government's policy, or lack of policy, which had ensured his death. The lofty tribute paid to him in the House of Commons by Mr Gladstone proved that his courage and devotion were recognised even by those who could not excuse his betrayal. The debate which followed Mr Gladstone's eulogy and defence was long and acrimonious. Lord John spoke on the fourth night of the discussion, answering Lord Hartington with spirit and energy. He recalled the fatal stages which led up to the fatal disaster of Khartoum—the abandonment of the Soudan, the destruction of the best Egyptian Army at Tel-el-Kebir, the ill-omened advance of the gallant and hopeless Hicks Pasha. The noble Marquess declared that General Gordon was sent out in deference to public opinion, to the agitation, in other words, of W. T. Stead. "Such a man," replied Lord John, "should not have been made a sure sacrifice to public opinion." Then said the noble Marquess, "General Gordon's life would have been spared if it had not been for the treachery on the part of some of his garrison." Again Lord John had no difficulty in brushing aside so paltry a defence. "I entirely dispute," said he, "the right of the Government to set up that excuse for their *laches* and delays. The treachery could not have succeeded had not Omdur-

man been captured by the Mahdi. How long," asked Lord John, " before the capture of Khartoum had Omdurman fallen ? A very few weeks at the outside. What does Lord Wolseley tell us in the last despatch with which we have been favoured from him ? Why, he tells us how deeply he regrets being unable to leave England a month earlier than he did. That fatal month was lost by the apathy, by the indifference, or, if the noble Marquess pleases, by the over-caution of the Government, the month which, had it not been lost, would have prevented the fall of Khartoum and the death of Gordon. Worst still, by the confession of the noble Marquess himself, the delay was due to the indecision of the Government as to the necessity of the Expedition itself. The Government had rejected all the suggestions and proposals of General Gordon as early as February 1884, and it then became the first duty of the Government to devise means of rescuing him from Khartoum. Yet it was the middle of July, or, according to the noble Marquess, the middle of August, before the Government took any practical steps to rescue the brave man whom they had so long left unaided to his own resources. These are the grounds," said Lord John, " on which we say the Government are culpable in the eyes of this House, of the country, and of the civilised world for the terrible catastrophe which we all deplore." A terrible indictment, truly, unanswered and unanswerable.

From the past Lord John turned to the future.

Nothing had been said which could beget confidence as to the course which the Government intended to pursue after their military operations were successful. There was no agreement nor continuity in the speeches of Cabinet Ministers. The only clear policy yet defined or expressed was the policy of Sir Stafford Northcote. Would the Government adopt it? The noble Marquess was not encouraging. "He asked us if we are certain that we shall have the support of the people—if we are certain that we shall have the support of the House, even if to-night we gain a majority? I am certain of neither of these things; but of this I am certain—that it is our duty to endeavour to carry this Resolution;[1] and I am certain that it is the duty of the House of Commons to carry it. Sir, I know not what the division may be—I know not whether the numbers in our Lobby may be great or small, but this I do know—that behind these numbers, be they great or small, there will be ranged the generous aspirations, the fixed resolve, and the

[1] Thus ran the Resolution: "That an honourable Address be presented to the Queen, humbly representing to Her Majesty that the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan, has involved a great sacrifice of valuable lives and a heavy expenditure without any beneficial result, and has rendered it imperatively necessary in the interests of the British Empire and of the Egyptian people that Her Majesty's Government should distinctly recognise, and take decided measures to fulfil, the special responsibility now incumbent on them, to assure a good and stable government to Egypt and to those portions of the Soudan which are necessary to its security."

firm determination of an indignant and sorrowing but a courageous and indomitable people." It was a brief eloquent speech, which closed worthily a memorable debate. Mr Gladstone's majority was but a poor 14, and nothing remains to say about it, except that Gordon's murder remained unavenged until Lord Kitchener led his expedition to Khartoum in 1898.

Mr Gladstone, meanwhile, unappalled by death and disaster in Egypt as in Ireland, had determined suddenly to add another two million voters to the electoral roll of England. Perhaps he thought the responsibilities he had incurred were so heavy that the larger the area over which they were distributed, the easier would the burden be to bear. Perhaps the loud voices of Messrs Bright, Chamberlain, and Dilke insistently attacked his ear. Whatever was the motive, the Bill was introduced by Mr Gladstone on 28th February, and read a first time on 1st March. Lord John was already making plans for opposition a year before the project was explained by the Prime Minister. "I am for opposing the assimilation of the two franchises on principle," he wrote to Northcote on 5th February 1883, "(Lord Chatham's—that the Counties represent property, the Boroughs persons) and then when beaten on Second Reading making the best fight we can in Committee. It is necessary to look a little ahead lest our friends should be committing themselves in the dark." So that when the Bill was brought in, he was ready for the fray, and on 4th

March 1884 gave notice that on the Second Reading he would move an amendment.[1] The Bill was not very well received, and there were rumours everywhere of dissension.

"We live in a perpetual crisis here," he wrote to his brother, the Duke, on 4th March 1884, "and everybody is beginning to look forward to a dissolution as the best way out of the difficulties of the situation." However, the Bill was read a second time on 24th March, and the Amendment was moved by Lord John in a spirited and closely reasoned speech. He declared at the outset that 2,000,000 electors were to be added to the constituencies, and no hints are given as to their allocations. As it was extended to Ireland, it would create the member for the city of Cork (Mr Parnell) the Grand-Elector of four-fifths of Ireland. He was unable to explain the Prime Minister's action on any other ground than that he had fallen into the Birmingham fallacy of regarding a vote as an abstract right and not as a trust. "For my part," said Lord John, "I do not regard the franchise as a right. I do not think we ought to regard it in that light. In approaching a great organic change in the Constitution, we ought to think, not how it will affect the privileges of individuals, or even of classes;

[1] Here are the exact terms of the amendment: "That this House declines to proceed further with a measure having for its object the addition of 2,000,000 voters to the electoral body of the United Kingdom, until it has before it the entire scheme of the Government for the amendment of the representation of the people."

but how it will affect the stability of the Constitution and the wellbeing of the body politic—the State."

That is a sound argument, and it cannot be said that in devising his Bill Mr Gladstone had ever wasted a thought upon the State. He merely proposed to hand over the power from those who exercised it in the counties to those who did not, and for no specified reason whatever. With sharp point Lord John criticised the proportional representation of the three kingdoms. "Scotland was to gain, England was to lose, Ireland was to remain stationary." In other words, "Ireland is to be favoured; Scotland is to have justice done; but England—unfortunate unhappy England—is to be the country which is to receive less than justice." And then, going back in his memory to the past, he made a comparison between the first Reform Bill and the present one. "I ask hon. Members to remember," said he—"I, at least, am old enough to remember—the agitation throughout the country in the years 1831 and 1832, when there was so much eagerness for Reform. What was the cry then? It was—'The Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill' . . . What is the cry now? Your cry now is—'One-third of the measure, and not more than one-third of it.' Do you expect to agitate the country or excite the constituencies with such a cry as that?"

The Government's secrecy, indeed, was the surest ground of his attack. The promised measure of re-

distribution was undisclosed. There was nothing but Mr Gladstone's word that it would ever be brought in; there was not even Mr Gladstone's word to explain what its provisions would be. Lord John's peroration, then, was amply justified, and received no answer. "Before you so treat the whole system and substitute a new one for it, let us see what your new scheme is in its details and in its entirety. It is, therefore, in no spirit of terror or craven fear—with no unworthy suspicion of our fellow-countrymen, and with no desire to shut our eyes to the shortcomings of our existing representative system, but as prudent guardians of existing institutions, as faithful representatives of our constituencies, as loyal upholders of the integrity of the Empire—that we claim full and complete knowledge and information on all these points which I have now tried to lay before the House, and I will conclude by making an appeal to Her Majesty's Government in the words of the ancient Greek warrior :—

> "'Remove this cloudy darkness: clear the sky
> That we may see our fate, and die at least,
> If such thy will, in the open face of day.'"

To this piece of clear and damaging criticism no adequate reply was given. The situation remained difficult for the Government. Hartington, it was said, objected to the inclusion of Ireland in the new measure, as well he might, for it gave to Parnell 10 or 15 votes. Goschen actually went into the Lobby with

the Opposition. But it availed nothing. Mr Gladstone carried the Second Reading by a majority of 130. "Our defeat this morning was crushing," wrote Lord John to his brother, "the only comfort allowed us being the reflection that the magnitude of the majority was owing to the Parnellite vote going, as the Yankees say, solid for the Bill, which will increase and consolidate their power. Not a single Liberal or Whig followed Goschen into the Lobby."

The fight, however, was not yet over, nor was Lord John yet free from the ardours of battle. "I have been asked," he wrote to his brother on 11th November 1884, "at very short notice to lead off the attack to-day on the Third Reading, a task I greatly dislike, as it has been determined not to divide at the end of the debate; but so it has seemed good to our leaders in both Houses, and I am asked to make a stout speech, on which the Lords may found themselves." He returned with vigour to his old objection that, "while on some occasions Her Majesty's Ministers can speak in honeyed accents, and appear to be in the most amiable of minds, in reality they intend not to budge one single inch from the position they have taken up; and that, while they insist upon this isolated measure being placed on the Statute-Book, they will not take this House nor the country into their confidence as to the corresponding measure of reconstruction which this Bill renders absolutely necessary." Such was the deadlock: on the one hand, Mr Gladstone refused to produce his Redistribu-

tion Bill until the new franchise was passed; on the other, the Opposition declared that it would continue to oppose the Franchise Bill until the details of redistribution were made clear.

For the other evasive answer which Mr Gladstone gave, Lord John professed the severest contempt. "We are told in answer to our demands," said he, 'O why do you not come forward and tell us what you wish for.'" He had no difficulty in disposing of this contention. "Now," he went on, "I will say a word or two on the other branch of the question which has been put before us—namely, this new doctrine of the duty of the Opposition to furnish the Government with their views on the question of redistribution. It is the first time during my long career in Parliament that I have heard such a proposal made to an Opposition. The present proposal is a complete and entire novelty, not likely to lead to satisfactory results, or to the due discharge of the Ministerial responsibilities of the Government." Mr Gladstone, in his reply, referred to Lord John's speech as "a speech which introduced with great ability every combative element and consideration into this debate which could tend to render it impossible that anything but a great constitutional crisis should ensue. To widen a breach, to insure a conflict, to extinguish hopes that might yet remain of reasonable accommodation, I admit there is no man so well qualified as the noble Lord." Such words have a strange sound in the mouth of so sturdy a combatant

as Mr Gladstone. But they were no answer to Lord John's argument, and the threat of attack upon the House of Lords which they contain was not likely to frighten the most timid of the Tories.

Nor did the debate on the Third Reading in the Commons allay the suspicions of either side. "The political tension is becoming very great," wrote Lord John to his brother on 12th November 1884. "I don't know which party is most alarmed at the prospect, but am convinced that the party which shows itself least afraid is most likely to succeed." Six days later the uncertainty seemed as great as ever. "The situation changes from day to day," wrote Lord John to his brother on 18th November, "almost from hour to hour. When the House broke up yesterday evening we had nothing before us but Granville's and Gladstone's identical statements, which were not regarded with favour by the majority of our friends, but during the night and early this morning fresh overtures were received from Gladstone and Hartington, the result of which was to open up so fair a prospect of agreement that at our private conclave before the general meeting to-day it was resolved to recommend them as a basis for negotiation, and the meeting accepted the proposal with hardly a dissentient voice. Salisbury will, however, to-night ask for more definite assurances on one or two points which still seem uncertain, and the Committee stage will be postponed for some days to enable the negotiations about redistribution to proceed. Personally I see enormous

difficulties and dangers in the way of negotiation, but I suppose they must be faced."

All went well for the Opposition. On 19th November Lord John was already in a sanguine temper. "So far as I can learn," he wrote to his brother, "our friends are well satisfied with yesterday's decision, and our opponents are equally annoyed. Whether the negotiations fall through or not, the position of the House of Lords will have been greatly strengthened by what has occurred, and Salisbury will occupy a stronger position in the country at large than he did before." The negotiations did not fall through. The Government was compelled at last to show its hand, and the Franchise Bill was read a third time in the House of Lords on 5th December, the day after the Redistribution Bill, agreed upon by both parties, was read in the Commons a second time. Thus the House of Lords was saved for a while from mending or ending, and the Opposition was justified of its long struggle. As for the Bill itself, it did but add to the gamble of politics. It did not make the Radicals tenants for life, as its promoters fondly hoped it would. It did not prove dangerous to the prospects of the Conservative Party, as Lord Granville hinted its opponents feared it would. Indeed, if Gladstone had revealed his plan at first as he revealed it at last, the bitter conflict might have been avoided, which, after all, was about a question to which nobody cared very much to have an answer.

There is no doubt that, in Opposition, Lord John

had marvellously increased his reputation as a debater. He was at last released, so to say, from the pleasant domination of Disraeli. So long as that statesman lived, John Manners was content to do his behests. After Disraeli's death, he won, unconsciously perhaps, a freedom which had never yet been his. And in the newly-acquired independence, which in the goodness of his heart he did not cease to deplore, he proved that he possessed greater qualities of leadership than some of his colleagues had suspected. He was throughout the period of Gladstone's Government an alert and wary watch-dog upon the words and deeds of the Prime Minister. He showed at its best the faculty, which had always been his, of answering a speech on the spur of the moment, and of damaging the case of the other side point by point. To take a single instance. On 3rd April 1884, Gladstone, who had been ill, suddenly appeared at the Commons, and proceeded to belabour the Opposition for daring to debate the vexed question of Egypt. "Gladstone swept the House like a whirlwind last night," wrote Lord John to his brother, "and quite killed the debate. I had no idea of speaking, but was compelled to leave a slice of mutton, on which I was frugally dining, to cover our retreat, none of my colleagues liking the job." Gladstone had made light of the Government's responsibilities, and had expressed indignation that what he and his Ministers were doing, or leaving undone, in Egypt should be discussed at all. "Although my right hon. Friend

(Sir Stafford Northcote)," said Lord John, "made his Motion to-night in one of his calmest, most moderate, most equitable, and even briefest of speeches, the Prime Minister responded to it in a state of animated fury such as I have never seen equalled, even by the right hon. Gentleman himself." Gladstone had made light of General Gordon's enterprise and its danger. "The Prime Minister," said Lord John, "enlarging on General Gordon's mission, seemed to assume that it was one of perfect ease and safety, and he was quite amazed that any question should be raised on that subject." So narrow, indeed, was Gladstone's vision that he saw in the criticism of Egypt nothing but an oblique attack upon his Reform Bill, of far greater importance in his eyes than the efficient support of General Gordon. He contrasted unfavourably the Opposition of the day with the Opposition of 1831 and 1832, when the first Reform Bill was being passed. He asserted that there were then far more serious foreign affairs in debate, and the Opposition was silent upon them.

Lord John's answer was easy and plainly delivered. "The right hon. Gentleman," said he, "has gone back to 1831 and 1832, and, I suppose by way of contrast, has asked us to compare the remarkably satisfactory condition of affairs in Egypt at the present time with the complications which then existed between Belgium and France. The state of affairs in those countries was no doubt harassing and perplexing enough; but they are not for a moment

to be compared in interest or intensity of danger with the questions now engaging our attention in Egypt and the Soudan. By the action of Her Majesty's Government, the affairs of Egypt are the affairs of England; and to talk about the affairs of Belgium or France 50 years ago is to perform an evolution of confusion, and, I was going to say, of deceit and imposture upon the confidence of the country which could not be undertaken by any one except that wonderful master of words and phrases, the Prime Minister." Nor would he acknowledge for a moment the justice of the Prime Minister's reproach that all the Egyptian debates were raised by the Opposition. Gladstone had not told the House how many of the debates had been originated by the Opposition and how many by his friends sitting below the gangway. In any case, Lord John was impenitent, and proposed with the help of his friends to keep a sharp eye and a sharp tongue for the rash enterprises of the Government. "Whenever we think it necessary," said he, "to ask questions, or to move the adjournment of the House, or to raise debates on these most important affairs, we shall continue to do so, perfectly undisturbed by the sarcasms of the Home Secretary or the fury of the Prime Minister." And faithfully he kept his word.

His energy and courage had their due reward. As early as 1883 he was acting as Leader of the House when Northcote was away, and received from Lord Salisbury an amiable letter of thanks. "There can be no doubt," wrote the head of the Tory Party,

"that the acceptance by you of the lead during Northcote's absence is the arrangement which is far the more satisfactory to the House of Commons. I only hope that you won't let it involve you in more work than is safe at this time for you." And when Northcote's leadership seemed to lack vigour and initiative, there were many who would most gladly have served under Lord John. A passage from Cranbrook's journal makes this evident. "There is clearly a move against Sir Stafford," wrote Cranbrook on 17th February 1884, "which may have dangerous effects. There will be an attempt to make Salisbury sole leader, but how I do not at present see. John Manners would clearly be an acceptable Commons leader, but he would never allow himself to be used against Northcote."

What Cranbrook said was perfectly true. Lord John would never have striven to oust a friend, and that he should have stepped into Northcote's shoes was plainly impossible. Even when another leader became necessary, it was not his own claim that he pushed. "Salisbury and Northcote," wrote Lord John to his brother on 10th June 1885, "will in all probability have to face the enterprise. The latter is in very feeble health, and in my opinion not equal physically to the strain of the House of Commons. Beach has quite taken the place I ventured to assign to him two years ago, and will, if necessary, succeed Northcote in the leadership of the Commons *omnium plausu*." Nor did his abrogation

of self end here. A year later, when no doubt remained that Home Rule would ensure an election and a probable change of government, Lord John wrote to Lord Salisbury offering his resignation from the Cabinet, and he made this offer when he stood very high in his party and in the House of Commons. "I did not like to answer your very kind letter," wrote Salisbury in reply, "until I had an opportunity of talking to some of my friends. We desire very much to retain your counsel in the Cabinet, but we are confronted with the difficulty that the House of Commons will probably demur at the entire removal of all representation of Agriculture from their body. Will you kindly leave the question of your resignation over till after Easter? Smith joins me in making this request, and I hope you will not refuse it."

Meanwhile—in 1885—the death of Gordon, the rebellion in Ireland, and the hastily contrived Franchise Bill had done their work, and Mr Gladstone's Government was tottering to its fall. On 23rd May 1885, Lord John paints a gloomy picture of the Radicals in a letter to his brother. "Gladstone looks terribly worn," says he, "and out of heart. I can't think he will go on much longer. His colleagues are always at sixes and sevens, and everything betokens a speedy break-up. The state of affairs at home and abroad is perfectly appalling. The only consolatory symptom I perceive is the increasing hold Salisbury is obtaining over the popular mind." A fortnight later, on 6th June, the fate of Mr Gladstone and his colleagues

seemed darker still. "Childers told the Governor of the Bank t'other day," Lord John wrote to his brother, "that for three months the Government had been on the verge of dissolution, and that whenever Gladstone got up to speak none of his colleagues knew what he was going to say, and that when he sat down, none of them knew on what authority he said what he had said. No agreement was arrived at yesterday in the Cabinet as to the Irish Crimes Act, and the differing Ministers go about openly talking of their difference."

The end came suddenly, and when it was least expected. Again Lord John shall tell the tale. "The Government has fallen," he wrote on 10th June, "not by our action, but by their own and their party's dissension. It was known that Dilke and Chamberlain were determined to break loose, and the Budget was as convenient a stumbling-block as could be found. The Queen may possibly insist on Gladstone trying a patch up till after the General Election, but I doubt her success even if she tries, and Salisbury and Northcote will in all probability have to face the enterprise."

Thus came to an end Mr Gladstone's ill-omened Government. It had lasted five years, and had left England immeasurably weaker than it had found it. When it took office, British prestige, as I have said, stood higher than ever it had stood before. When it fell, there was no power in Europe which would listen obediently to its word. In Ireland it had stirred up

all the elements of strife, and by alternate severities and benefactions had ensured a policy which could end only in disaster. The tragedy in Egypt, brought about by a hopeless helpless course of indecision and tergiversation, was fresh in the minds of all the world; and it was left to Lord Salisbury without a majority in the Commons to pick up the pieces as best he could.

At the outset there were many difficulties to be faced. Lord Salisbury was reluctant to accept office before a General Election, while Gladstone refused to take up office again. "We are in the midst of a Ministerial Crisis," wrote Lord John to his brother on 15th June 1885. "Gladstone is resolute in resigning, and Salisbury feels compelled to attempt the arduous task of forming a Government.[1] That Beach should succeed Northcote (whenever he retires) in the leadership of the Commons is arranged in entire accord with my views. I have not now the physical strength for such a task, and it is possible I may not be able to stand the wear and tear of a House of Commons life in office, even if it be not one of hard work."

Though it might have seemed a plain course to follow, Lord Salisbury had to overcome many obstacles before he could complete his Cabinet. At the second meeting in Arlington Street, Lord Randolph Churchill was absent, and Hicks-Beach, when the question was

[1] Lord John kept a full journal during the construction of Lord Salisbury's Cabinet, the last of the kind that ever he kept. It is printed in an Appendix.

put to him whether he would accept or refuse office, curtly refused. Lord Randolph declined to join the Government unless Sir Stafford Northcote resigned from the Leadership of the Commons. He did more than this. "He insisted," says Lord John in his journal, "on a reconstruction according to his own ideas. This was felt to be preposterous." Worse still, a few days later Beach supported Lord Randolph and Drummond Wolff in charging the House of Lords with "unconstitutional conduct" in insisting on changes in the Redistribution Bill. It seemed as though no Conservative Cabinet would be possible; but at last Hicks-Beach and Lord Randolph withdrew their complaints, Sir Stafford Northcote went to the House of Lords, and the new Government was properly installed.

The Government of the Caretakers was brief and uneventful. By February 1886, after a General Election, Mr Gladstone was back in office, resolved upon passing a measure of Home Rule for Ireland. Before Parliament met all was uncertain. "Lord Cowper," wrote Lord John to his brother, "knows nothing of Gladstone's intentions, and nobody appears to know what line he or any other leading statesman means to take at the opening of Parliament." However, nothing could turn Gladstone from his purpose, though he kept a profound silence as to the details of the scheme he was to propound. A growing unpopularity had no effect upon him. "Gladstone can't find a Duke," wrote Lord John to his brother

on 22nd February, " who will allow his wife to become Mistress of the Robes, and he and his Government are generally repudiated by Society and the educated classes. But with the help of the Parnellites he has a majority in the House of Commons." To such a depth of ignominy had the great Liberal Party fallen!

Through February and March the political situation remained unchanged in uncertainty. " But," as Lord John wrote to his brother on 18th March, " at Mrs Peel's party last night Sir A. Welby (who is in Gladstone's confidence) told Janetta [Lady John Manners] that he thought Gladstone would bribe Chamberlain and Trevelyan by abandoning his purchase scheme. If so, he virtually abandons everything, for nobody would consent to hand over the Irish Landlords and all the classes dependent upon them to the uncovenanted mercies of an Irish Parliament; but in a short time, I suppose, we shall know which thimble the pea is under." On 8th April the uncertainty was relieved. Mr Gladstone took up the thimble and revealed the pea, and it wasn't much of a pea after all. " Gladstone was loudly cheered," wrote Lord John to his brother two days later, " at intervals, but his scheme fell flat, and his speech was tedious, with unnecessary figures. The plan is so complicated and full of checks and counter-checks that it cannot work. His voice lasted wonderfully, but he is, I hear, inaudible to-day."

Gladstone, abandoned by the chief of his friends, still persisted with his foredoomed measure. As one by

one his old colleagues left him, his chance of success grew fainter and fainter. "The scene yesterday," wrote Lord John to his brother on 10th April, "between Gladstone and Chamberlain was dramatic in the extreme, and thenceforward there will be strong personal hostility on both sides. Hartington far exceeded any previous efforts, and spoke with a warmth, sincerity, dignity, and firmness which made the whole House feel he was a real leader of men." The hardest thing that Gladstone had to bear was the fury of Bright, who, though he let his opinion be known, "was determined," said Lord John on 24th May, "not to speak, as a speech from him just now would go far to settle the question."

Lord John himself intervened in the discussion on 31st May as the debate was drawing to an end. He followed Mr H. H. Fowler, and summed up the question with a forcible lucidity. Mr Fowler had concluded his speech with a list of famous Irishmen who had served the Empire—a dangerous argument for a Home Ruler, and gave Lord John the opportunity of asking what they, one and all, would have thought of Mr Gladstone's Bill. The reasoning of the Radicals was, in fact, largely irrelevant. "I contend," said he, "that for men responsible for the life, property, and liberty of their fellow-subjects in Ireland to rely upon two or three sugary speeches from these Benches, and to profess unmitigated confidence in those who delivered them, is one of the most lamentable signs of the times. The

gentlemen who made those declarations of confidence seem to forget the last five years of outrage and violence, which had rendered the history of Ireland a scandal. They appeared to forget that they themselves, good easy men, were not exposing themselves, their families, or their property to those frightful risks. They say, 'Look at our noble confidence, see how generous we are, mark the trust we repose in the gallant Irish people.' But not one of them, so far as I know, is risking anything dear to himself; therefore they can afford to play that magnanimous part, and to expose to the risks and hazards of this novel Parliamentary creation the rights and liberties of their Irish fellow-subjects."

Then passing to Ulster, which, "if included in the Bill, will be treated as a conquered province," he said, "so far as Ulster is concerned, this Bill is one of penalties, disabilities, and privations." Then he quoted with excellent effect a letter written by his grandfather to his friend, William Pitt, in June 1784—a letter in which the then Duke of Rutland wrote: "Was I to indulge in a distant speculation I should say that without a Union, Ireland will not be connected with Great Britain in 20 years." With equal felicity he showed the absurdity of those zealots who painted in glowing colours "the intense eagerness of the Irish people for a repeal of the Union." "Not one single outrage," said he, "during the last five years on man, woman, or beast had been perpetrated for the purpose of obtaining repeal of the Union. Every one of those

atrocious outrages has been committed for the purpose of obtaining somebody else's property, of wreaking personal revenge on somebody, who in the exercise of his undoubted civil freedom has committed some act or abstained from some act, and had so brought upon him the vengeance of the murderers and moonlighters in the country districts." And having held up to ridicule the pretended aspirations of the Irish people, he exhorted the House of Commons, "by rejecting the Second Reading, to save Great Britain from shame, humiliation, and disgrace, and Ireland from ruin, intestine strife, and, it may be, from civil war and reconquest."

With these words he closed the last debating speech that ever he made in Parliament. His long career as a fighter for his party's cause was over. During another six years, four of which he spent in the House of Lords, he answered such questions as were put to him as Chancellor of the Duchy. He did not again descend into the pit of partisan strife. Meanwhile Mr Gladstone's Irish Bill was thrown out, and Parliament was dissolved. In the campaign which followed, Mr Gladstone, alone of his party, met with a triumphant success. "Though Gladstone excites great personal enthusiasm wherever he appears," wrote Lord John to his brother on 24th June 1886, "I don't think his speeches have produced much effect on their readers, and even if his health and strength permitted, the time is too short to allow him to attend many more meetings." The result was, indeed,

foreseen and inevitable, despite the gallant efforts of Mr Gladstone. The Radicals were handsomely beaten at the polls, and Lord Salisbury became Prime Minister for the second time.

When the Tories came back into power, Lord John was haunted by the dread that he might be invited to accompany Sir Stafford Northcote to the House of Lords. He was speedily reassured. "I am happy to tell you," thus he wrote to his brother on 27th July 1886, "that at my interview yesterday with Salisbury nothing was said about a peerage, and I regard the danger as over. I think it likely that I shall return to my old post, but at present it is uncertain. Hartington has taken a clear and intelligible line, and is supported in it by both sections of the Unionist Liberals." As to the post which he was to be offered, he was mistaken. He became not Postmaster-General, but Chancellor of the Duchy. "The work is less," he told his brother, "and the salary likewise, but I am content. The difficulties of a Minister forming a Cabinet are great, and it is one's duty to diminish them as much as possible." That was always his attitude. It was not for him to insist upon his own claims, and he accepted what was offered him without question or regret.

The new Government at the outset discovered the weakness which comes from divided and vacillating opponents. If there be no discipline on the other side, the ministerial Front Bench is of necessity hindered and perplexed. Of the consequent waste

in time and force Lord John made early complaint. "An opposition without regular leaders," said he to his brother on 31st August 1886, "is always a cause of delay and vexation; they obey nobody, and any fussy illuminated man becomes a law unto himself." On the Government side there was one—Lord Randolph Churchill—who remained a law unto himself unto the very end. No sooner had he won the leadership of the House of Commons than he proceeded to back himself against the whole party. He did not share Lord John's desire to diminish the difficulties of his chief, and his sudden resignation was, like its ready acceptance, inevitable. Lord John's account of it is clear and in close accord with the facts. "With us," he wrote on 28th January 1887, "Randolph's explanation is the chief excitement. So far as I could learn, it did not move a single man on our side, and was apparently a bid for the leadership of the Radical Party. It is impossible for any colleagues to work with him. With him it is *aut Cæsar aut nullus*. Smith discharges his novel and difficult duties with modesty and skill."

The part which Lord John played in the new Government was of no great importance. He gave his advice in the Cabinet; he discussed the progress of events in correspondence with Lord Salisbury; he answered the questions which arose from the working of his own department, and was held responsible for the interests of agriculture. But, as I have said, his debating days were over. No longer was it his duty

to castigate the other side, and to oppose, in vigorous terms, the fallacies of his opponents' argument. Moreover, on the death of his brother in 1888, he succeeded to the Dukedom of Rutland, and the ascent to the House of Lords, which he had dreaded two years before, was for him a dignified necessity. So that when Lord Salisbury dissolved Parliament in 1892, after the General Election of that year, his active political career may be said to have come to an end, though his interest in affairs remained as keen as ever unto the last, and he was always ready to give to others the sound advice which was the fruit of his long experience.

CHAPTER XV.

AN INTERCHANGE OF LETTERS.

It was, as we have seen, Lord John's constant practice to attach himself to the leader under whom he held office. With him service meant friendship, and after the death of Lord Beaconsfield he and Lord Salisbury exchanged, with a lively and intimate confidence, their views upon affairs of State. That a close intimacy should have existed between these two statesmen is something of a surprise, for, though they were united in a common love of their country and its traditions, though they agreed in combating unnecessary change, they looked out on the world, especially at the beginning, with very different eyes. They had not fought their early Parliamentary battles side by side as had Lord John and Disraeli. They had come into the House of Commons at different times and with different purposes. Lord John's friends were not always Lord Salisbury's. One dominating impulse of Lord Salisbury's life was a dislike and distrust of Disraeli, whom he worked with for some years, whose policy he rarely approved, and

whom he attacked even when they were colleagues. To Disraeli, to whom Lord Salisbury's machinations were not unknown, who was content to describe him as "a master of flouts and jeers," and who with great forbearance promoted him to high office, Lord John was, as has been seen, a lifelong friend and adherent. In the matter of the Franchise, as in the Eastern Question, Lord John was heart-whole with Disraeli, while Lord Salisbury was either hostile to him or uncertainly in agreement with him. There was a kind of inflexibility in Lord Salisbury which persuaded him to put Disraeli in "the category of new men and new things." Lord John, on the other hand, though he clung to the opinions which once he had formed with tenacity, took a larger view oftentimes of men and matters than Lord Salisbury. That Disraeli was a "new man" did not disconcert him for a moment. And he had so firm a faith in the people—a faith which he had held ever since the days of Young England—that an extended franchise had no more terrors for him than for Disraeli. Rightly or wrongly he held by a creed or system which Lord Salisbury repelled with scorn. If Lord John harboured no grudge against Lord Salisbury for holding the opinion he did, he deplored, as I have said, the method of his secession in 1867. "I forbear comments," he wrote in his journal, "on the mode and the moment by and at which this vital change was forced on us."

Both men were desirous of lightening the burden

of the poor; and here again they contemplated the end which they hoped to reach from different points of view. It was Lord John's aim, ever since he wrote his 'Plea for National Holy-days,' to increase the happiness and the knowledge of the people. Lord Salisbury wished to save the people money. While Lord John believed that public parks and museums, adding to the amenity of a drab life, would improve most readily the lot of the dwellers in populous cities, Lord Salisbury, out of a sort of individualism, protested against the beautifying of London. He vigorously attacked the project of the Thames Embankment. "He was moved to indignation by the demands made upon Parliament on the authority of 'men of taste,' whom he declared to be 'the most incorrigible depredators on the public purse that had ever cursed an economic House of Commons.' . . . He accepted and indeed gloried in the epithet of Philistine. When the nickname was being bandied about in his presence and a definition had been asked for, he interposed swiftly with the suggestion, 'He who is assailed by the jaw-bone of an ass.'"

The jest was swiftly made and characteristic. Yet it was irrelevant. Even from the Philistine's point of view, he was unjust to the Thames Embankment. That thoroughfare, which he called a "profligate extravagant job," has conferred an immense boon upon those very citizens who he thought would be defrauded by it. Not only has it become a lounging place for the poor: it has facilitated, by the busy

LORD ROBERT CECIL.

The third Marquess of Salisbury.

(From a drawing by George Richmond, R.A.)

tramways which run along it, the speedy and cheap return of the working-man to his home in the suburbs. And that, we are told, is the first duty of municipal government. Nor would Lord John have approved Lord Salisbury's condemnation of the South Kensington Museum, on a similar ground, alleged by Lord Salisbury, that it gave to the people no adequate return for the taxation which was imposed upon them. Lord John believed most devoutly that man, whether rich or poor, did not live by bread alone, and though he never pretended to be a connoisseur, he did as much as any man of his time to make London a pleasant place to wander in, and to provide in its museums the inspiration which even the poorest may profit by. And let it not be forgotten that had it not been for his tact and persistence, the monument of Wellington in St Paul's, one of the glories of English art, would never have been achieved.

Lord Salisbury cared for none of these things; and not merely were the two men separated by a difference of taste, they were separated also by a difference of temperament. The cynicism of Lord Salisbury would not have agreed with the suave gravity of Lord John if they had not been moved, as I have said, by common creeds and common ambitions. However, after the death of Lord Beaconsfield, which buckled them more closely in friendship, they wrote to one another with a cordial frankness; and though there are gaps in their correspondence, enough letters remain to prove how close was the relationship which

existed between them. Lord Salisbury's letters, admirable in tone and form, are the letters of a statesman deeply versed in foreign affairs. After Mr Gladstone's disastrous policy in Egypt, he writes from Florence on 1st February 1885, bitterly deploring the consequences of Radical rule. "I agree as to Khartoum. The country," says he, "will not consent to allow such sacrifices as we have made to remain without fruit. Something for England, something for Egypt, must be the upshot of these two bloody years. . . . We see great numbers of troops going past to embark for Harrar and Massowah. I confess it goes against me to hear that these places are to be given up to the Italians, and that the Red Sea Littoral, where we used to be practically supreme, is passing into other hands. But I suppose it could hardly be avoided in the perplexities to which the divided councils of Government have brought us."

Another day, 29th September 1885, he discourses to Lord John with excellent lucidity on the Concert of Europe. "We must be on our guard," says he, "against the fallacy of speaking of the Powers as if they were a council whose co-operation in a settled policy could be counted on. If they were, it would be reasonable to contemplate them as administering justice in the Balkan peninsula, punishing Alexander to-day in order that Milan and George might not sin to-morrow. But this is far from being the case. You never can count on the Concert further than you can see it, and its instability is one of the most for-

midable factors in the problem in which you have to deal. Is it worth while, therefore, sacrificing any substantial advantage, however small, in order to do homage to an ideal of retributive justice which you may be sure will never be thought of again? The extreme weakness of the Turks forbids any hope of rigorous treatment. . . . If we undo what we have done, we shall do the Turk no good. He is too weak to profit by it. But we shall make Russia undisputed mistress of the two Bulgarias."

Lord Salisbury's reply, made on 21st September 1887, to a letter from Lord John, who extolled the work done in the House of Commons by W. H. Smith and Arthur Balfour, is of interest for more reasons than one. "I am very glad," he wrote, "to have your testimony as to the success of Smith and Balfour. With respect to the latter, it is especially satisfactory to me, as you were somewhat doubtful of the wisdom of the appointment, which I admit was a venture. There is another gratifying reflection to be made on their success—as also upon the position which Hartington has attained in political estimation,—and that is that 'straightness' has in these days not lost, but rather gained, power over the minds of men." Straightness is still, as it was then, the one quality essential to statesmanship, and so long as it survives in our councils, we can cheerfully and gratefully dispense with what is known as "cleverness."

At times they are in disagreement on this topic or on that, and to read their letters is to assist at an amiable

debate. On 27th January 1888, Lord John takes alarm at what had happened in the Cabinet the day before. "I fear some of our colleagues, as well as myself," said Lord John, "left the Cabinet yesterday rather bewildered as to our military future. I had been under the impression that with regard to it, as well as to Irish and foreign policy, continuity in its essential features was to be our guide and aim. Now for several years past the creation of an Army Corps has been announced as an object to be aimed at, and Parliament has been induced to incur great expenditure in order to achieve it. If I understood Stanhope rightly yesterday, all that is now wanting to its accomplishment is saddles, and some £20,000 will purchase them. If so, I earnestly hope that no further opposition will be made to that demand. . . . There is a story of a great army that was ruined because its gaiters were without buttons. Our cavalry without saddles would be equally ridiculous; but that it should be owing to a Tory Government that such a *bêtise* should be committed makes me ashamed." Lord John held the Army and the Tory Government in high honour both, and he probably found Lord Salisbury's answer not wholly satisfactory. "The determination of the precise sums to be given, either to Army or Navy, was left to subsequent discussion between the two offices and Mr Goschen," wrote the Prime Minister the following day. "All that I understood the discussion in Cabinet to do was to indicate the order of importance to be

assigned to the several objects under discussion. And I think it was the general impression that the completion of the tale of rifles and small guns . . . was a matter of more importance than the commissariat saddles. That these were to be obtained in due time, when more urgent claims had been satisfied, was not, I think, contested." It is difficult to weigh competing urgencies in the balance. An Army can do without commissariat saddles as little as it can do without rifles and small guns, and it was plainly the business of the exchequer to give equal satisfaction to both demands.

A year later Lord Salisbury is apprehensive of Socialism, the new force which was beginning to show itself in England. "Kennington," he writes on 20th March 1889, "is, as you say, a blow. . . . I fear it is not on the Irish question, but on the Socialist. Both Balfour and I questioned every one who had any personal experience of the election, and the general reply is that neither Pigott nor O'Brien's breeches had any appreciable effect." If only O'Brien's breeches had persuaded Kennington to vote on the wrong side, all would have been well. The danger, foreshadowed in 1889 at Kennington, has been increasing ever since. Another warning was given to the Tories a few months after the disaster at Kennington. "I hear better news of Brighton," wrote Lord Salisbury on 22nd October 1889, "though I fear we shall not keep up the great majority of three years ago. We have the Socialist wave to count

with, of which you heard in Elgin. The artisans at the Railway Works are in solid blocks against us."

In 1890 Lord Salisbury determined to hold a November Session. The year had not gone well with the party, and the Prime Minister hoped to retrieve in the late autumn the failures of the spring. He did not attempt it without an energetic protest from Lord John. "Forgive me," wrote Lord John from Homburg on 15th July 1890, "if I say our parliamentary prospects do not seem to me promising. I dislike and object to a November Session for reasons inherent in the composition of the two parties, as well as for those which are patent to all men. The carpet-baggers, the adventurers, the faddists, and the lacklands are, in the main, in the ranks of our opponents, and to these London in November and December is just as good a place of residence as any other. But the country gentlemen, the country bankers, merchants, professional men, whether they sit for boroughs or counties, who constitute the backbone of your party, will hate and resent a November Session with all that it appears to entail, nor will they accept a problematical shortening of the summer half of the session by 3 weeks or 50, as an equivalent. I smell disaster in the fogs of November."

Lord Salisbury was for the present firmly on the other side. "I agree with you very much," he wrote on 27th July, "on the general question of November Sittings. However much I should prefer them personally to June Sittings, I quite see that the majority

of our people are always more likely to be available in June than in November. But the necessity of the present year is a special one, on account of the terrible fiasco which has befallen our legislative efforts this year, and which seems to exact an exceptional display of zeal." So the Houses of Parliament sat in November, when fogs brought disaster to none save to Mr Parnell. For in that bleak month the leader of the Irish was involved in a scandal which for the moment deprived the Irish party of its power to oppose, and the Tories had no difficulty in dispatching their halting legislation.

Lord Salisbury dissolved Parliament in June 1892, and while the election was still in progress, Lord John wrote the letter to his leader which we should expect of him. "If you obtain, as I think you will," said he on 2nd July 1892, "a majority, you will probably and properly wish to strengthen your Cabinet by the infusion of new blood; but owing to its present plethoric condition, you cannot do that without letting out some of its old blood. Now during the last year or two I have become aware that, while able to accompany the Queen abroad and to attend Cabinets and the House of Lords, I have not been equal to the public speaking and general rough-and-tumble work which have become essential characteristics of a Cabinet Minister's life. Before, then, anything is known of the result of the Election, I feel it right to place my resignation in your hands, in order that, when the time comes, if it should come, you may, so

far as I am concerned, act with perfect freedom and in full confidence that I shall expect and be pleased with your decision." It is not often that a Prime Minister with the prospect of making a Cabinet receives so amiable a letter as that, and Lord Salisbury answered it in the writer's own spirit of friendship. "I am very much touched," wrote Lord Salisbury two days later, "by the considerate kindness of your letter. I do not take the sanguine view you do. I am writing before any returns have come in, but I admit that the future is very doubtful, and that speculations on the consequences of our getting a majority are not wholly out of place."

And he proceeded to discuss his own position in the Cabinet should he win a victory at the Polls. Could he hold office and not lead? That was the question which he put to Lord John. "My impression is," he said, "that in the first instance it will be our duty all to resign, so as to give the Queen a free hand. I can conceive many reasons which might make her wish to have another Prime Minister, for I suppose that any new Unionist Cabinet must include Chamberlain and Churchill, and I doubt if I am exactly the man to lead them. I do not think I could accept any other office than that which I hold. A study of Lord John Russell's career has convinced me that Dowager Prime Ministers in a Cabinet are nothing but a nuisance." Lord John answered with an excellent argument in favour of Dowagers, an historical argument, which it is worth while to record. "We

are now in possession of the results of exactly one half of the elections," he said, "and as they leave you in a majority of 42 or 43, it is not unjustifiable to assume that you will not be in a minority at the close of the contest." Alas, for the vanity of human hopes, especially hopes of a majority in a parliamentary election!

"At any rate," added Lord John, "I will endeavour to answer your very kind and thoughtful letter on that basis. I fully understand and enter into the difficulties into which you would feel yourself plunged in that event, but I venture to doubt whether the mode of extrication at which you seem to hint, namely, your resignation, would be found practicable, especially if you resolve to remain outside the new Unionist Cabinet. I feel I am treading on rather delicate ground, but as you have rather led me on to it, I trust you will forgive me if I make a stumble or two. You quote John Russell as a proof of the inconvenience of an ex-Prime Minister being in the Cabinet. The instance is apposite, but, to go no further back, the great Duke sat in two Cabinets after he had been Prime Minister, and Lord John Russell was not Prime Minister when Lytton sang of him:—

> "'Here all unconscious of reproach
> Comes the calm Johnny who upset the coach.'

I can, therefore, just conceive the possibility of your consenting to sit in a Cabinet of which you were not

the nominal head, provided you were of opinion that such an arrangement at any rate for a time would be advantageous to the country. On the other hand, it is to be remembered that, if Lord Russell's acceptance of office under Lord Aberdeen did not much help that statesman, Mr Pitt's remaining outside Mr Addington's Cabinet did not contribute to the comfort or the stability of that worthy man's government. . . . Surveying the whole situation as impartially as I can, I come to the conclusion that if you have a majority, however small, you should continue to be Prime Minister, strengthening your administration in whatever way you think best. If, however, your objection to that course is insuperable, then I think that you would consent for the sake of I will not say the Empire, but of Europe, to remain Foreign Minister." The advice was the advice of an experienced statesman, and could not have been more clearly set forth. Unfortunately Lord Salisbury was not asked to answer the question for himself. Mr Gladstone, beaten in England, could still rely on the Irish to give him a majority, and Lord Salisbury had no choice but to resign ; and when he next took office, it was once more as Prime Minister.

From Homburg, Lord John sent Lord Salisbury a sympathetic message. " Your forebodings are being realised," said he on 15th July 1892 ; " nothing remains for us but to wrap our togas decently round our moribund forms. And yet I don't much envy the victors. The Queen, however, is greatly to be

pitied. The Empress Frederick last night spoke feelingly on the subject. The only consolation I could offer her was the timely reflection that H.M. was ten years younger than her future Prime Minister." Ten days later he writes to Lord Salisbury from Osborne, where he finds the Queen more easily reconciled to the new state of affairs. "The Queen has spoken freely and at some length to me," says he, "and takes, I think, a sober and right if rather rose-coloured view of the situation. The point she seems to lay most stress upon is the necessity of Rosebery taking the Foreign Office, in order to carry out your policy and give confidence to Europe. She expressed her readiness and determination to treat Gladstone and Harcourt civilly, but not graciously, which latter she declared was beyond her power to do. She added that she intended to remind Harcourt of certain declarations he had volunteered at his last interview with her.[1] What cheers and supports her is the conviction she entertains that the new Government cannot, will not (I am not sure she did not say '*shall* not') last long." [2]

[1] Sir William Harcourt records in his Journal ('Life of Sir W. Harcourt,' vol. ii. p. 185) that in answer to his little speech: "I hope, madam, you will feel our desire is to make matters as easy and as little troublesome to you as we possibly can," the Queen bowed and said nothing, and then asked: "How is Lady Harcourt? Terrible weather, is it not? and so oppressive." And that was all.

[2] The Queen's conviction was justified. Mr Gladstone resigned in eighteen months, giving place to Lord Rosebery, who himself remained in office not much more than a year.

For some years Lord John had feared that an attack would be made upon the House of Lords by the Commons. The champions of "freedom" are wont to resent any thwarting of their tyranny. Mr Gladstone had uttered fierce threats against the Lords at the time of the first Home Rule Bill, and Mr John Morley's phrase about "ending or mending" was not yet forgotten. In January 1894 Lord John believed the assault imminent, and he confided to Lord Salisbury how he thought the assault should be met. "It seems to me pretty certain," said he, "that either now or next session the House of Lords will come to loggerheads with the House of Commons, or rather with the Government, for the House of Commons in the eyes of the country has ceased to be a power. Dragooned, fettered, humiliated, nobody thinks or cares about it. . . . Ought we to yield? From the standpoint of policy, I say no!"

That is the answer which would be expected of one who never lacked courage, and who had the prevision which makes plain the consequences of cowardly surrender. In the November of the same year the danger which hovered over the constitution drew nearer, and Lord John was ready not only with a warning but with a plan to avert the danger. "If instead of the House of Lords," he said to Lord Salisbury, "it was the Kingly Office that the Ministry proposed to abolish, no one could doubt the Queen's right and duty to withhold her sanction. And should she think that the abolition of the House of Lords

would endanger the stability of the Throne, the people would applaud and support her resistance to that measure. To sum up, I hold that the Queen is, or will be, mistress of the situation, and has it in her power to deal a death-blow to the present anarchic despotism that threatens to destroy the Constitution, Freedom, and Prosperity."

These wise words had a profound influence upon the mind of Lord Salisbury. For twelve days he said not a word, and then on 20th November: "Your letter furnished me with plenty of food for reflection," he wrote, "but it was not on that account that I have put off answering it so long. The delay is due to another cause. The considerations raised in your letter seemed to me so important with respect to actual circumstances, and still more with respect to some that may be in the immediate future, that I ventured to give the letter to some one who, I knew, would place it before the illustrious person principally concerned. This, I know, has been done. I do not expect any written reply from that quarter. Such a step might be unwise. But I am sure that your words and arguments are likely to make a deep impression." Happily, Mr Gladstone's retirement saved the constitution from immediate danger, and Lord John's timely warning remained but a useful sketch of future defence.

When Lord Salisbury returned to office in 1895, no place was found for the Duke of Rutland, and their correspondence, if it declined in interest, gave evi-

dence of a still warmer friendship than of old. It is concerned chiefly with the intimacies, the joys, the sorrows, of life, which belong not to the world but to the two friends themselves. Now and again they touch lightly on public affairs. In 1895 the Duke deserted for the first time the front bench in the House of Lords—a desertion which Lord Salisbury had commented on in a letter to the Duchess. "My object in writing," replied the Duke on 9th September 1895, "is to thank you for a very kind letter, and for the feeling allusion which you made in a recent letter to the Duchess to my appearance at your back instead of at your side in the House of Lords t'other day. I won't deny that the change of position was a slight shock at first, but I was in excellent company with Cranbrook and Knutsford, and I am absolutely convinced that on all grounds, public and private, the change was imperative."

In September 1898, Lord Salisbury snatches a moment, in the height of the crisis about Fashoda, to send the latest news. "We have not yet heard what Kitchener has done at Fashoda, but he appears not to have had any fighting with Europeans to do, so I suppose the scare about the French occupation had no foundation." It had some foundation, but the scare was presently dissipated, and by 10th November the crisis was passed. "I must write a few words," said the Duke on that day, "of hearty congratulation on the entirely satisfactory conclusion of the Fashoda business. Your resources of patience,

firmness, and daring were all severely tried, and not found wanting. The lesson will, we may hope, be not thrown away on France, and that restless people will turn their energies in some other direction." In 1899, Lord Salisbury, with more warmth than is commonly expressed in his letters, looks back gratefully to the past. "I am very much touched," he wrote on 21st December, "by your kind letter. It is just half a century ago since I first met you at a dinner at my father's in Arlington St. During the long political friendship and alliance which has lasted so steadily during the intervening period, I have to look back to a series of kindnesses at your hands." A friendship and an alliance of fifty years are not given to many, especially in the world of politics, and it says much for the loyalty and forbearance of the Duke of Rutland and Lord Salisbury that their amiable relations were never irreparably disturbed.

In the days of the Boer War a letter from the Duke gave Lord Salisbury an opportunity of making a characteristic comment on the Free State—a comment abundantly justified by what happened fifteen years later. The Duke, on 21st January 1900, sent to Lord Salisbury an extract from a letter written by Lord Robert Manners after the battle of Colenso. "Many Boers came over the river," wrote Lord Robert, "and I must say that we of the Red Cross received nothing but kindness and help at their hands, many of them wishing us good luck and safety in the War. Most of them were Free Staters, straight-limbed,

honest-eyed looking men, with whom I was very favourably impressed." The Duke added his own view that if the Free Staters, of whom he (Lord Robert) speaks, are fair samples of that people, there ought to be no insuperable difficulty in reconciling them to a new state of things when the war is over. Lord Salisbury cordially agreed. "I have no doubt," said he, "that the Free Staters will in the next generation live as comfortably under British Rule as the Highlanders did after Culloden. The Irish are exceptionally difficult to assimilate, owing to their religion, and perhaps to their vile climate."

In 1895 the Duke of Rutland's long period of public service was definitely closed. Five years later Lord Salisbury laid down the heavy burden borne by the Secretary for Foreign Affairs. The Duke hastened to congratulate him. "Though your Ministerial rearrangements are not complete, I won't delay any longer offering you my hearty felicitations on the most important of them all—your liberation from what I am tempted to call the *Duplex querela* of those two gigantic offices. That it cost you a pang to resign the F.O. I can well believe; but I am sure you were right to renounce it, and I firmly believe that you could not have handed the seals over to a better or more judicious successor than Lansdowne. The general tone of the Press about him, the War Office, the Army, &c., is, I think, abominable." Lord Salisbury replied in the last letter from his hand preserved by the Duke. "It is in one sense a relief,"

he wrote; "in another it is painful, to sever my connection with the department, with which I have served some 15 years, but I think the sense of relief predominates, especially as the labour was becoming physically more than I could face. Why the Peers have made this dead set at Lansdowne I cannot conceive. It is extremely unjust." Thus came to an end Lord Salisbury's long tenure at the Foreign Office. In less than two years he ceased also to be Prime Minister. In the letter which closes this intimate correspondence, and which was signed "Your sincere and affectionate friend," the Duke of Rutland paid a lofty compliment to his old chief. "I cannot let a post leave," he wrote, "without endeavouring to express the emotion with which I have heard of your retirement. When I look back on the long series of eventful years during which you guided our destinies, I feel on public grounds something approaching to despair. But for your own health and comfort and peace of mind, it may well be that your friends should rejoice, and certainly all, friends and opponents alike, will admit that no Prime Minister ever laid down his glorious burden after a more splendid career." No more letters seem to have been written on either side, and it would have been impossible for this memorable interchange of thought and counsel to have closed on a happier note.

CHAPTER XVI.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS.

Lord John Manners was a politician without guile. He sought in public affairs nothing but an opportunity of service. The simplicity of his character did not permit him to envisage one end and try to grasp another. Never in his long career did he consider his own advantage. As I have said, when Cabinets were being formed, he refrained always from pressing his own claims to preferment, and it is not strange that his leaders, urged on all sides by the personal ambitions of their followers, found a vast relief in his modesty. To him the contests of politics were things of circumstance and ceremony. He would not stoop to take an unfair advantage, or to use a weapon which was not shaped for the fray. At the time when "three acres and a cow" were attracting the votes of the mob, he had neither cows nor acres to offer to his constituents, and thought it the business of an honest man to tell them so plainly.

And while he would not stoop to fight the battle of politics, as life is lived, from hand to mouth, with

whatever weapons came most easily to his grasp, he was never, when his party was in power, absent from the Cabinet. And this is the paradox of his unique career. He held the office of a Cabinet Minister longer than any of his contemporaries. The statistician tells us that for 17 years and 154 days he was a Minister of the Queen. In 1852 he went straight into the Cabinet, having never served on probation as an Under-Secretary; and in all those years and days he did not fill a higher place than that of Postmaster-General. It was his own fault. The list of honourable posts which were offered to him and declined is, as I have shown, a long one. To no other of the sons of men has it been given to make so many great refusals. The Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland, the Vice-Royalty of India, the Governorship of Canada, the War Office or the Admiralty, the leadership of the Commons—all these offices he passed by with a singular diffidence. The mere fact that they were placed within the reach of his acceptance proves the confident opinion which his colleagues had of his worth and ability.

Many reasons were given for this self-abnegation —none of them conclusive. Some said he was still the victim of the literary indiscretion committed in his youth. When Gathorne Hardy retired to the House of Lords in 1878 and felt that "special calls might come to his department," Beaconsfield, wrote Hardy in his journal, "thinks of Manners, if the vacancy should be, and spoke very highly of

his working power and ability, which I said were underrated because he had written two foolish lines." I do not believe that his reluctance to hold the positions of honour which he might have held had anything to do with the memory of his famous couplet. Surely that had been lived down in the passage of forty years. Reasons there are for his refusal of honourable posts, and that was not one of them. He was, for instance, never, until he succeeded to the Dukedom in 1898, well enough off to accept so onerous and costly a position as the Vice-Royalty of India. A younger son, he had little more than a younger son's portion. It was not always easy for him even to retain his place in the House of Commons. "The statement in 'The Grantham Journal,'" he wrote to his brother on 4th March 1884, "regarding my pension is correct. You may remember that I consulted you as to accepting it in 1880, and that you approved of my doing so. Without it, indeed, I must have retired into private life, and even with it I can only struggle on by borrowing money, and selling out from time to time some of Janetta's stock."

The lack of pence may help to explain his fear of high and costly offices in Ireland or India. The motive which kept him always at the Post-office or the Board of Works or the Duchy of Lancaster is at once less obvious and more closely personal. A curious diffidence persuaded him to recoil from great responsibilities. He did not believe that there was no enter-

prise for which he was not fit, and, having a keen sense of discipline, he did not demur to the post, whatever it might be, to which his leaders sent him. Equally ready was he, as has been said, if he thought he might make room for one whose exigence or whose instant popularity made his inclusion in the Cabinet desirable. But the fact that he remained more years in the Cabinet than any other, without being a great Secretary of State, shows that Disraeli and Lord Salisbury both recognised his real value as a counsellor. In the Cabinet he was a tower of strength, a beacon of intelligence. No reader of this book will fail to discover the faith which the three Prime Ministers under whom he served had in his judgment. They sought his advice both in and out of the Cabinet, and were well served when they took it. Nor were Disraeli and Lord Salisbury the only ones to whom he was a prudent counsellor. He possessed the full confidence of the Queen, whom he attended on her journeys to Savoy or Biarritz, and who listened readily to the voice of his experience.

There was found among his papers—to give one instance of many—an envelope inscribed: "My sailing orders for Berlin, 1888." Within is a letter from Lord Salisbury, explaining a situation of great difficulty. "The German Ambassador," wrote the Foreign Minister, "has very earnestly but quite unofficially communicated to me the dread that is felt by persons of influence at Berlin, whom he did not name, lest the Queen should treat Prince William

in a manner likely to offend him. She thinks very badly of him, resents his conduct to his mother, and has more than once shown her resentment very plainly. He is intensely irritated at this treatment, being quite conscious of his own position. It is feared the Queen will repeat the process when she comes to Berlin with results most disastrous to the interest of the two countries. Do what you can to warn and restrain her. The matter will require much tact, but you can do it if any one can. She is very unmanageable about her conduct to her own relations: she will persist in considering William only as her grandson. But the matter has become political and very grave, and she must listen to advice."

One other example will strengthen the proof of the trust reposed in him. On 15th June 1884, Colonel Charles Lindsay wrote from Balmoral, asking Lord John to tell him, in accordance with the Queen's wish, what was his opinion of the political situation. Lord John complied in a letter of great worth and interest,[1] and had the satisfaction of knowing that the Queen, having read the letter, "quite comprehended now the condition of affairs, which, though an anxious one, was nevertheless hopeful." Thus, even had he been ambitious to hold the foremost place, as he never was, he might still have found consolation in the high value which was set upon his opinion by those whose trust was best worth having. Moreover, though he returned again

[1] This letter is printed in Appendix.

and again to the same office, he did not lose his interest in administration. He was, indeed, an admirable head of a department, at once suave and resolute. I have already said something about what he achieved at the Board of Works, where his knowledge, his firmness, his constant defence of the artist against detraction and suspicion, conferred many boons upon London. One of his staff at St Martin's-le-Grand, credited with sound common-sense, has said that at the Post-office he did not approach questions from the standpoint of the philanthropist. So long as he was in office, it was the advantage of his department that engrossed him, not some vague profit for the human race. He refused to allow a misplaced idealism to interfere with the conduct of business, and was vastly interested in the details of the work. He treated the Savings Bank with especial care, and threw open its offices to women in order that employment might be found for poor gentlefolk. Mr Fawcett, by admitting women of all classes, spoilt a prudent design, and got the work done no more efficiently. For the rest, Lord John treated all those who worked under him with kindliness and consideration, and thus got from his colleagues their best work. "When he was there, there was always peace," said one official in the Post-office, and, since it was a place of activity, not of sloth, the official's words are as high a tribute as could be paid to him.

In political thought and opinion, he was, so to say, all of a piece. He did not advocate one policy to-day,

another to-morrow. It was no business of his to seize opportunity by the forelock, and he would rather have failed in an election than triumph by any renunciation of principle. In one aspect he seemed rather a political philosopher than a practical politician. The past and the future were sometimes clearer to him than the present. For though he grew in wisdom and judgment with the years, he appeared unchanged in a changing world. Nor was his unity of purpose the result of an inflexible uninformed mind. It was his principles which were never altered: in matters of fact none was more ready than he to revise a hastily made statement. On certain subjects he held to his opinion with unbending tenacity. He never shook off completely the influence of Young England; he remained unto the end faithful to the teaching of Bolingbroke. In other words, he was a Tory of an older fashion, a man of the nineteenth century who still preserved a faith in feudalism, who believed that high rank and great possessions could be held only in return for service, and that the Government existed not for the profit of the governors, but for the good of all the governed.

The enthusiasm of his youth never died within him. While he was not unconscious of his own rank and distinction, he supported the cause of the workers with courage and energy. He was convinced that the recognition of the privileges of his own class was not incompatible with a love of the people; and in this conviction there was no

hint of patronage. If he supported the people, it was because he believed that the people's patriotism and good feeling could be trusted, not because he wished to realise a vague ideal which he had inadvertently expressed. The doctrine of wealth at any price, preached in Manchester, never had an attraction for him. He aimed at a prosperity which was not incompatible with the general happiness, and which was not limited to buying in the cheapest and selling in the dearest market. His youthful ambition was to see a union of all classes. In the Utopia he dreamed of there was to be food and leisure for all. The order of peasantry was to take its place in the aristocracy of the land, and holidays and sports should be the pleasant lot of every one. Thus the country should once again deserve the name of "Merry England," then applied to it, as Lord John said himself, only in cruel and bitter irony.

He saw in his own time the success of much of this policy. Shorter hours, higher pay, the abolition of "truck," the emancipation of women and children from the mines and factories—these wholesome measures were passed, and their passage owed not a little to his initiative. Others of his ideals were never realised, and the attempt to make them realities did not a little to prejudice him in the eyes of the middle-class, then supreme in England. Nevertheless, he never lost the faith, which he expressed as a faith, in the people. It was this trust which persuaded him to advocate the extension of the franchise in 1867, and

even to attack the dangerous Bill which Mr Gladstone passed in 1885, chiefly on the ground that the Radical Prime Minister refused to divulge his plan of redistribution. And with a tenacity equal to that which made him constant to the memory of the past, he clung to the policy of Protection, or Tariff Reform, or Fair Trade, under whatever name it made its periodic appearances. Ever since, in 1848, he had given it as his opinion "that a scheme which admitted the produce of the Colonies and Indian corn duty free, and other foreign corn at a moderate fixed duty, would place the corn trade on a basis satisfactory to the mercantile interests of the country, would bind the members of our vast Colonial Empire to us by the closest ties, and would afford security to the English farmer," he remained faithful to the prudent Imperialism which he believed would relieve our poverty at home, and secure to us for ever our Empire overseas.

As Lord John was unable to change his opinion, he was, in the matter of fiscal policy, for many years opposed to either side. He was a Protectionist living in a land which had accepted Free Trade or rather free imports, and which, confident in its superstition, declined to reopen the question. Mr Disraeli's refusal, when the Tories came back into office in 1852, to discuss Protection was prudent and intelligible. It would be impossible to carry on the government of a country if each succeeding Minister undid the work of his predecessor. But long before 1880 the political

conditions were changed, and it is not surprising that Lord John felt himself out of sympathy with his party. As his articles in 'Blackwood's Magazine' prove, he was convinced of the ultimate necessity of Fiscal Reform, and his colleagues, one and all, foresaw a great danger, as well they might, in making even a shy reference to it. He was not deterred from doing what he thought right. In 'Blackwood's Magazine' for October 1881, then, he came out as the champion of the discredited policy. He pointed out that "Sir Robert Peel and the Anti-Corn Laws League fell into the not unnatural but egregious mistake of assuming that States, as they became democratic, would cease to be Protectionist," and time had shown conclusively how wrong they were. He was naturally frightened at "the yearly increasing dependence of this country on America for food," and he could not keep silence. "It will be to the Tory Party," he wrote, "that the industrial classes will have to look not only for the preservation of those great and sacred institutions, which are as dear to them as to any other section of the community, but for that reform of our fiscal system which shall enable them to earn a fair day's wage for a fair day's work."

His colleagues took alarm at his outspokenness. Mr W. H. Smith and Sir Stafford Northcote talked it over, and agreed that the discussion must be discreetly shelved. On the same day, 27th September 1881, Sir Stafford wrote both to Mr W. H. Smith and to Lord John. "I have just finished the 'Blackwood'

article," said he to Mr W. H. Smith. "It is neatly written, and is rather plausible; but I agree with you that the scheme is impracticable. At the same time, it increases my difficulty in speaking out. The authorship of the article is likely soon to be guessed; and if I condemn his plan *in limine* and within a day or two of its publication, it will look like a split, which of all things I wish to avoid." [1] To Lord John he writes with a tempered approval, promising an inquiry. "The 'Blackwood' has arrived," says he, "and I have read the article with much interest, and, if I may venture to say so, with great admiration of the skill and neatness with which the case is put. I cannot say that I am a convert to the possibility of imposing a duty on corn; but I am not prepared to refuse to examine the question. There is, of course, a difference between a simple proposal to lay on such a duty, and a comprehensive scheme of which it should form but a single and not the most important part. Probably, if we discussed such a scheme as yours, we should find it necessary to go pretty deep into the whole question of the incidence of taxation. Meantime, I do not doubt that you will have done good by calling attention to the matter; and I shall try to avoid saying anything that may debar any Committee from fully considering this, as well as other, roads to prosperity."

Though there is not much encouragement in these

[1] See Sir Herbert Maxwell's 'Life of W. H. Smith,' vol. ii. p. 54.

careful words, Lord John was still resolute to defend his case. Two years later he reiterates his argument in the same Magazine. "We are persuaded," he writes, "that the only way in which a duty on corn can be successfully proposed is as part of a great and comprehensive scheme of Tariff Reform." He met with no greater encouragement in 1883 than in 1881. Still, he never despaired, and made an attempt presently to win Lord Salisbury over to his side. From him, too, he got nothing more than polite disapproval. "As you know," wrote Lord Salisbury, "I cannot go with you altogether on the Tariff Question. But there is so much bigotry and doctrinaire folly on the other side that I entirely agree that the part you have taken in that controversy is likely to be of great public utility. It forces people to think for themselves on one of the most difficult problems that this generation has to solve." And in another letter Lord Salisbury explains clearly the impossibility of Fiscal Reform, as he saw it then. "Whatever the ultimate issue," he said, "of the controversy between Protection and Free Trade (and I can only imagine it ending in favour of Free Trade), I conceive that it would be impossible for owners and occupiers of land to invest their capital on the faith of Protection until they had an assurance that it has so reconquered its position that no further change of system was to be feared. And this assurance I venture to remind them could only be secured by the conversion of both political parties."

Even this formidable task of converting two parties did not dismay Lord John, and he never ceased, when the chance came, to advocate the policy which he thought alone could restore England to prosperity. When Mr Chamberlain conducted his celebrated campaign, the Duke of Rutland, already eighty-four years of age, took the greatest interest in it, and by speech and letter tried to forward what he believed to be the good cause. His last utterance on the subject, always near to his heart, is dated 9th May 1903, and is contained in a letter addressed to Mr Balfour: "My excuse for troubling you with a letter," he writes, "must be the anxiety I feel at the threatened breach in the party owing to the unexpected repeal of the Corn Tax. Having a vivid recollection of what happened in '46, I don't like to leave untried any expedient which may seem calculated to ward off a serious quarrel in our ranks. Can, then, any middle term be found which shall substantially meet the requirements and allay the susceptibilities, if any, of both parties? I venture to think there may. The Government would probably decline to reimpose the tax on Corn—be it so Chaplin and his supporters will propose the reduction of the tea duty—a reduction in itself highly popular. Accept it, and meet the deficit so created by imposing a duty on imported flour, a manufactured article, and thus close at its commencement what threatens to become a serious split in the party. I refrain from boring you with my arguments. If you accept my olive branch, well

and good, and if you can't, no harm is done, and *liberavi animam meam.*" The advice was not taken, but the Duke of Rutland had not only liberated his soul, he had proved that his keen interest in fiscal reform had continued, unabated, for nearly sixty years.

On the Eastern Question, which, like the question of tariffs, is still unanswered, he showed a like tenacity. Early in his life he had taken the side of the Turks, and on their side he remained unto the end. Never once did he suspect that he had backed the wrong horse. Moreover, he resembled all those who have championed the Turkish cause since the time of David Urquhart in pressing the cause with zeal and energy. For him Russia was our enemy, watchful and implacable. Throughout the discussions of the Eastern question in 1876 and after, he was suspicious of the Russians, hopeful for the Turks. He expressed the belief, held by Urquhart at the time of the Crimean War, that the Turk, if left to himself, would know how to defend his interests, and the Turk showed his courage and his capacity at Plevna. On this topic he gave always the same advice. When in 1877 we were "invited," as Lord John thought, "to procure easy terms for Russia at an early stage of the war, because she might not realise them at the end," he held that, "whatever may be the fortune of this war, and however successful Russia may be at its close, it would not be right or wise for us, while the Balkans are yet uncrossed, to favour terms of peace which are open,

from an English point of view, to grave objections." And when it is remembered that the terms which Russia invited us to help her to obtain included the turning of Bulgaria into a nominally vassal State, under the direct influence of Russia, the increase of Montenegrin and Servian territory—that is, the increase of Russian influence in those principalities, the cession of Batoum, and an undefined district of adjacent country—it is not surprising that he took alarm both at the Russian proposals and at the tone of the speeches delivered by Lords Salisbury and Derby.

Indeed, at no time was he in very close agreement with Lord Salisbury about the Turk, and they drifted further apart as the years went by. Some twenty years after the crisis of 1877, Lord Salisbury sent him in a letter an interesting sketch of our relations with the Turk. "About the Turk," said he on 14th November 1898, "I do not think we see eye to eye. I believe that under the guidance of Palmerston and Lord Stratford de Redcliffe we made a grave blunder in deserting the alliances of 1805. We sacrificed the alliance of a Power that was growing for that of a power that was evidently decaying. But we might have accepted that policy and tried to work it out, if Gladstone had not by his mad philanthropy placed an eternal enmity between the Turk and us. After that it was hopeless to expect anything from the Turkish alliance. We are ruled out. Directly we try to act with them an Atrocities Campaign commences, and

our position becomes untenable. With this temper of the English people, it is no use trying for the Turkish alliance. The Emperor William thinks he can step into our shoes. It remains to be seen whether he will succeed. I doubt his getting more than a few tradesmen's orders." If Mr Gladstone's mad philanthropy be left out of the reckoning, the Duke of Rutland was nearer to the truth than Lord Salisbury. It is a paradox of history that if Turkey has long been a decaying power, it is still undecayed, and that the Power whose alliance we might have had, instead of Turkey's, and indeed did have in 1914, has indeed hastened speedily to decay. And as to the Emperor William, he got far more out of the Turkish alliance than a few tradesmen's orders, as we know to our cost.

Time, then, has fought on the side of the Duke of Rutland, who, to 'Blackwood's Magazine' for February 1899, contributed an article, the last of many, upon the Eastern Question. "A Note on Eastern Policy" he called it, and in it he traced the causes and the growth of our misunderstanding with Turkey since the Crimean War. He went still further back into history, and hinted that, though the Whigs at the end of the eighteenth century favoured Russian aggression at the expense of Turkey or Scandinavia, Pitt, "with his keener and more prescient genius, foresaw that the extension of the Muscovite empire, especially in Europe, would not be for the happiness and welfare of mankind." Though Pitt's attempt to

check Russia failed, he bequeathed his policy to our statesmen, particularly to the Tories, and that policy had been followed intact until the last few years. The policy, briefly summed up, was that Russia shall not obtain Constantinople and all the advantages it offers. Such was the policy which the Duke of Rutland had always supported, for which he had once threatened resignation, and he asked pertinently whether a departure from it was justified.

The reasons generally given for this momentous change were, first, the Bulgarian atrocities; second, the Armenian massacres. And with great care he analysed the causes of those outbreaks, holding that England was not free from blame, and that the Bulgarian atrocities, at any rate, were the natural result of England's blunders during and after the Crimean War. Now when England, in 1853, determined to go to the armed assistance of Turkey, and undeterred by Napoleon's failure in 1812 even dared to invade Russia, she did her best to secure allies wherever she could, especially near the field of action. So she despatched Mr Longworth to Schamyl's headquarters in Circassia, and urged that gallant soldier to carry on his war against Russia with what vigour he might. The result was that by the end of the war there was not a fort nor a blockhouse along the whole littoral of the Black Sea in the hands of the Russians. What reward was given to the gallant Circassians after the war for the help they gave to the Allies? They were exchanged for Kars at the Treaty of Paris, and thus

fell back again into the hands of their enemies. "The brave but uncivilised inhabitants," wrote the Duke, "of that unconquered country (Circassia), rather than submit to the hated rule, fled to the number of some 40,000 across the Black Sea to Bulgaria, where the Sultan allotted them land and houses; but between Bulgarians and Circassians no sympathy nor amity could possibly exist, and the latter as time went on became more and more discontented with their lot, and ready to break out into violence and outrage against their unneighbourly neighbours." Such in his view was the origin of the Bulgarian atrocities, for which not Turkey, but England and Russia, were responsible, and the Duke saw no valid excuse for a reversal of England's secular Eastern policy in the events, which Mr Gladstone used recklessly, to justify Russia's attack upon Turkey in 1877.

While he acknowledged that there had been massacres in Armenia, committed chiefly by Kurdish marauders, the Duke insisted that it was neither wise nor patriotic in consequence of these deplorable events to execute a *volte-face* in our Eastern policy, and become accomplices with Russia in her traditional progress to the Dardanelles. When in 1898 England aided Russia in setting up Prince George of Greece as High Commissioner in Crete, despite the protests of Germany and Austria, she abdicated publicly the supremacy which she had held at Constantinople. "Then followed," thus the Duke of Rutland told the tale, "perhaps the most melodramatic stroke of diplo-

matic strategy since Napoleon pretended to adopt the Mussulman faith in Egypt. Without difficulty, with little delay, but with all preparations carefully made, and the ground rendered secure beforehand, the German Emperor stepped into the place at Constantinople vacated by England, and by ostentatiously accepting the lavish hospitality ostentatiously offered him by the Sultan, announced to all the world that in Germany, Turkey had a fast friend, on whom she could rely at any rate for good offices, if not for military assistance." It was indeed a bold stroke, which, as the Turks thought, blotted out the Bulgarian atrocities and the Armenian massacres from the pages of history. Thus the German Emperor captured, without risk to himself, Constantinople, the Sultan, his army, and Palestine—all steps towards the substitution of German influence and German commerce for English at Constantinople. And the Turkish Army, as the Duke foresaw, led by German officers, proved in the future a far more formidable menace to our safety in the East than it already was. The march of events fulfilled all the sinister prophecies of the Duke of Rutland, and as we re-read his "Note on Eastern Policy," we can recognise him for a seeing guide in a blind world.

The Duke's influence did not rest only upon his clear prevision of events nor upon the tenacity with which he clung to the opinions which he formed justly and deliberately after a due reading of history. It was the gift of character which gave him and kept

for him the place which he held in the councils of the realm. It has been said that in him character amounted to genius, which is no more than the truth. He could neither simulate another's part nor hide his own. What he said he meant, and when once he had formed an opinion he would have thought it an act of dishonour if he had concealed it from his fellows. And it is for this reason, above all, that for sixty years he was the trusted counsellor not only of the leaders of his party but of his Sovereign.

EPILOGUE.

I HAVE called this book 'Lord John Manners and his Friends,' because friendship meant more to him than to any other public man of his time. Having no desire to be first in all companies, a desire which is the sad negation of friendship, he attached the best of his contemporaries to him almost without knowing it. And when in 1895 he retired from the active exercise of the craft of politics, though to be sure he never ceased to take an interest in affairs or to attend the debates in the House of Lords, he retired to Belvoir, to spend what was left him of life among his friends and his books. His life at the famous castle on the hill was a survival of feudalism in act. Even down to the watchman on the ramparts, it suggested the manners of another day. He himself was in all things a *Grand Seigneur*. He practised in his age the chivalry whose doctrines he had preached in youth with so fine an eloquence. At last he was able to realise in himself and in his surroundings the gospel of Young England. Far from the grasping democracy which construes benefits for rights, he still stood firm in the ways of feudalism. The lord of

broad acres, he held his lands and his castle in trust. His gardens and his galleries were open freely to the people, and he never regretted his generosity. "He was in the habit of living in a large house," he said in the House of Commons as early as 1845, "in which there was a collection of works of art. He had seen as many as a hundred people at a time pass through those galleries. He had never seen any mischief or injury attempted, and nothing could have been more satisfactory than the conduct of the people on all occasions." Such was the practice of his predecessors, and he continued it with an assured conviction.

His last years were darkened by many a sorrow, which he bore with the fortitude which was always his. In 1899 his wife died, his close companion for nearly forty years.[1] The world about him shrank, as it always shrinks for the old. He remained in grief and disaster patriotic and uncomplaining. He found solace in books and in memories of the past. Literature had been an interest to him, even before he was engrossed by politics. He had himself attempted either medium—prose or verse. The things of the mind had

[1] It is thus in a letter to Lord Salisbury, written on 15th July 1899, he characterised his loss: "You rightly judge what she was to me. My happiness, health, welfare were her primary care, but then came loving care for the children, and afterwards for all, high and low, rich and poor, whom she could in any way befriend or succour. My only consolation will be in the firm belief that she is now only resting from her labours, and my knowledge that she has been spared the grief of witnessing my death. With you I try to say *ex imo corde* God's holy will be done."

not been indifferent to his ancestors. In the days of Elizabeth and James the poets—among them Ben Jonson—had been welcomed at Belvoir. His own grandfather had been the kindly friend of Crabbe, and he, too, went back, when politics no longer needed him, to the practise and study of letters. As I have said, it was not until 1899 that he sent his last article to 'Blackwood's Magazine.' With eagerness he followed the researches of modern historians, and in the proper spirit. For of history he had always had a very clear conception. It was not in his eyes, "a mere record of the Kings who reigned, and the battles they fought, but the record of the country's inner life, the habits, thoughts, and tastes of the people, the real aims and objects of its Government." These words were spoken in 1844, as we have seen, and though the opinion they express is familiar to-day, it was wholly original eighty years ago.

The Nestor of his age, he treasured, especially in his memory, the history of the sixty years of political strife in which he had taken an active part with the detached imperturbability of a spectator. His gentle blood was, in the words of a friend, "only an illustration of his gentle conduct." The spirit of justice which breathed within him permitted him to see all things in their right relation—even the talent of an opponent. I remember him reproving a critic of politics for taking what he thought was too harsh a view of Cobden. "My recollection of him," he said, "is that he was honest, straightforward, and amiable,"

and he had fought him, with all his energy, not only in the controversy about Free Trade, but in the fiercer strife which aimed at saving women and children from a cruel and devastating labour. When it was my good fortune to know him, he was in his eightieth year. He was a tall man, who carried his head a little forward, and who kept until the end the straight slim figure of a youth. Loose-jointed, quick in his movements, he gave an impression of one possessed by a tireless energy. His eyes were clear and questioning, and there was in his face a suave and earnest gaiety which was the vivid index of his character. A crown of silver hair, abundant and unruly, was, so to say, the symbol of an abiding vitality. He was ready in all weathers to walk in the woods about Belvoir, discoursing of William Cobbett and the mistakes he made in the planting of trees, of Adelaide Kemble, and the other distinguished personages who had visited the Castle. He loved talk, and excelled in it. As the interest in his subject increased, the years fell from him, and he spoke with a clear-toned resonance, an alert precision of phrase, which made it a delight to hear him. Most willingly his mind and speech dwelt upon the remoter past, upon the friends of his boyhood and his youth: George Smythe and Baillie-Cochrane, Augustus Stafford and Disraeli, when Disraeli was still the Younger. As you listened to him you seemed to hear speaking the authentic voice of biography. He talked of Disraeli always with sympathy and admiration. I remember only one

word of criticism of his old leader that came from his lips. He told how he was once walking with Disraeli in Bond Street, when a strange figure accosted them, saying, "I am the unfortunate Tracy Turnerelli," and how Disraeli had no word of kindness to give him. His own kindly nature revolted against this harsh treatment of an indiscreet admirer; and he thought that Disraeli should have softened the blow to the unhappy man. For the rest he liked to recall the oratorical triumphs of old, and he would give the palm for eloquence to Sheil and to Alderson. But above all it pleased him to sing the praises of George Smythe, his companion at Eton and Cambridge, his comrade in the House of Commons, his closest friend, until the death of Smythe separated them.

Amiable and courteous [1] to all, he was as keenly sensitive to the trials of others as to his own, and was in the truest sense the father of his people. Having always a sympathy with the hapless, he took a lenient

[1] No better instance of his courtesy can be found than the letter which he wrote to Gillard on 10th February 1896. "Gillard," thus the letter ran, "I should be sorry that you should hear from any but myself, the bad news I have to communicate to you. I therefore write without delay to let you know, that at the close of this season I am compelled to give up the Hounds, and to cease to hunt the country. You are so identified with the Hunt and the hounds by length of successful management, and by the perfection to which you have brought the Pack, that I need hardly say that your future will be an object of care and concern to me." If anything could soften the blow given to the eminent Huntsman, surely this praise for the past and security for the future must have done it.

view of the delinquencies of others; and though none ever cherished loftier ideals of conduct than he, he was never pitiless against those who broke the rules of life. When Valentine Baker came to grief, he was eager to bring him succour. "Why should not you and Salisbury agree," thus he wrote to Gathorne Hardy, then at the War Office, "to send Baker (under an assumed name), when he comes out of prison, into Turkomania to buy horses for the Indian Army, and put a little military spirit into the Persian garrisons of that important frontier. It would be a great pity that so much energy and ability should be lost to the State." Baker was not sent, but Lord John's suggestion proves his generous temper, and this is but one example of many. And when death came to him, in August 1906, it surprised him full of years and honours, proud in the assurance that he had served his Sovereign for a greater length of time than had any of his contemporaries, without any other hope of reward than the devotion itself brought to him, and with no other fear than that after him, the last upholder of an old and noble creed, the age of chivalry would be dead indeed.

MONUMENT TO THE SEVENTH DUKE OF RUTLAND IN BOTTESFORD CHURCH.

(By Arnold Wright.)

APPENDICES.

I.

LETTER FROM LORD GEORGE BENTINCK TO A SUPPORTER, EXPLAINING WHY HE RESIGNED FROM THE LEADERSHIP OF THE COUNTRY PARTY.

Confidential.

HARCOURT HOUSE,
Dec. 28th, 1847.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have not written to you for a long time. I got struck down by the influenza on the Friday in the first week of the session; it knocked all energy out of me, and made me a very poor creature all through the sitting.

Since the session I have had no end of trouble on my hands. My vote and speech on the Jew Bill gave mortal offence to certain sections of the Party, so much so that I got an intimation on the Monday following that the Party would no longer consent to be led by me, and, in fact, I must retire or else it would be broken up.

I need scarcely say I did not wait to be cashiered, but with a good grace at once resigned, and now I

am a free and independent Member of the House of Commons.

The National Club have done it all, and the great Protectionist Party has degenerated into a "No Popery," "No Jew," League. Uncompromising consistency was the principal virtue which recommended me to the choice of the Party. I earnestly forewarned them of my long-avowed opinion in opposition to theirs on all these questions. I deprecated in the strongest manner so unnatural a choice; I implored them not to thrust me into a false position; and now, in fulfilment of my prophecy, the same uncompromising consistency is the sin for which I receive my *congé* to retire!

However, it is best as it is—when with all my efforts I cannot bring 120 together on any one great question affecting the vital and substantial interests of the United Kingdom or her Colonial Empire, whilst 180 can be collected to keep Jews out of Parliament or Roman Catholicks from burying their dead in their own Churchyards according to the rites of their own Church, it is high time I resigned an office which practically gives none of the influence which its name imports.

My motion for a Committee to enquire into the state of the Sugar Planting Colonies will come on the day Parliament meets.

I propose beginning with East Indies, which I expect will be only two or three days' business; then taking the Mauritius, which can not be a long affair, and concluding with the West Indies, which I suppose may take a good while.

As yet, the total number of signatures to Petitions against the Jew Bill amount to 13,180! On the Corn Laws I think 400,000 petitioned on one side, and 1,000,000 on the other!

In 1830 Lord Ashburton presented a Petition from

the City of London signed by 11 Bank Directors, 27 London Bankers, 1110 Physicians and Medical Practitioners, 500 Practising Attorneys, and 2600 of its first Merchants, signed in all by 14,000 Persons in favour of the Jews. Huskisson at the same time presented a great Petition from Liverpool, I should almost think the last he ever presented from Liverpool. How is Liverpool disposed now ?

A smashing Petition from the Merchants and others of Liverpool, at one blow extinguishing the aggregate signatures of the 178 Petitions got up by the National Club, would be rather a wet blanket upon the flickering embers of Bigotry now being fanned into a flame by the National Club.

It is whispered that the Hebrews hold the late Duke of Saxe-Coburg's Bonds for half a Million Sterling !

Wishing you a Happy Christmas—Believe me, Always sincerely yours,

(Sgd.) G. Bentinck.

II.

LETTER from Lord Granby to Lord Derby on the Tripartite Leadership.

Jan. 1851.

My dear Derby,—I have not answered your kind letter before, for to tell the truth I have found great difficulty in doing so, but I am anxious at all events to answer without delay the first part of it, and to assure you that I did not think (for your letter seems to imply I had done so) that you had shown any want of cordiality or frankness in communicating with me on public affairs ; on the contrary, I have ever found

you most kind, and patient and indulgent—but this you know, and I need not say more on this subject, —but what I did think was that from various causes, principally from my own want of energy and ability, the position I held was a mere nominal one, which I should not have minded, but also I felt it was a false one, for I was held responsible, and supposed to be conversant with counsels and tactics of which I knew nothing. Even this I might have borne if I had felt convinced it was for the advantage of the Party, but it seemed to me on the contrary that it was rather a disadvantage than otherwise, inasmuch as it cast ridicule upon us, and laid us open to the sneers and taunts of our opponents. What, for instance, could be more absurd than our position as a great Party than on the debate on the Income Tax? I having to the best of my power stated what I believed to be the views of the Party on that subject, Disraeli rose almost immediately afterwards and took an entirely different view; and when Charles Wood came and asked me what were the real views of the Party, and whether Disraeli and yourself and Herries had not consulted together previously as to the line to be taken, I felt that the tripartite arrangement was an absurdity, and the sooner it was dissolved the better for the Party.

When first the Committee was arranged, I proposed to Disraeli that we should meet once a week to talk matters over. If that had been agreed to, this could not have happened; but such being the actual state of things, and the position of the Party, it appeared to me that it was very desirable to free ourselves from this ridicule; and since Disraeli's talents and powers of speech had become everywhere known and acknowledged, I felt my name was no longer required, and by withdrawing I should follow not only my own selfish inclinations, but should

at the same time, by consolidating the leadership in the Commons, add weight and strength and unity to the Protectionist Party. With this feeling I wrote to you, Disraeli, and Herries, and Herries and yourself seemed to agree with my opinion, and to enter into my views. I regret, however, to say Disraeli, in his answer to my letter, though extremely kind, took a more gloomy view, and said that my decision would decide his, and talked much in the same strain when I saw him at Hughenden. I must, however, hope that he never seriously meant this. I cannot think he could, and at all events I hope that you will be able to dissuade him from taking such a course; for if, as you say, he does not renounce Protection, and will make a declaration to that effect (I did all I could to persuade him), if he will place himself at the head of the Protection Party in the House of Commons, if he will declare he is in favour of protecting—I care not whether he looks to the realisation of his opinion in this Parliament or another, a little sooner or a little later—but that he is in favour of protecting British industry as against the foreigner, and of supporting that principle as opposed to the principle of free imports, I feel convinced that the Party, which I fear is now broken up, divided, dispirited, and out of heart, will again cheerfully rally round the banner thus manfully unfurled. And it would be a matter of perfect indifference what I might do, whether I remained as one of the Tripartite Committee, or gave him an independent support.

If, on the other hand, he is not prepared to support us, such a Protective policy for all classes, not confining it to the agricultural, but extending it to the shipping, the manufacturing, the colonial, then indeed under any circumstances, I should fear in the state and temper of the Party the worst results, and I could not honestly give my support. And knowing

the strong opinions I entertain on the subject, you would not wish me to do so.

I hope I do not undervalue the relief Disraeli proposes to afford by means of reduction of burdens, or shifting of weight and a revision of taxation. No doubt this may be very right and necessary as a measure of justice as between one class of Englishman and another, as a matter of internal arrangement; but as a great national policy, as one on which a Party is to be sustained or overthrown, as a settlement of the great question of Free Trade or Protection, it seems to me altogether inadequate. Two systems are before the world—England has to choose between them. Whatever may be her actual position, her wants, her engagements, her necessities, they cannot both be right or equally favourable to her industrious developments. To say that you will protect one class and not the other, or to inflict the evil or the good of Free Trade on the one and not on the other, seems to me equally unfair and impolitic. Either industry must be protected to enable it to bear the weight of taxation now imposed upon it, or the taxation must be diminished. But with diminished taxes must come diminished Institutions, diminished Establishments, diminished greatness, honour, power, and credit; and I fear the cry for cheap bread will speedily be followed by the cry for cheap government and a Republic. Believing this, I think we should as a Party do something more than let things take their course and wait for the expression of public opinion. Will you forgive me if in conclusion I quote a passage, though I daresay you know it, from Burke, vol. viii., p. 162, line 6 to end. I hope you will be able to forgive the length of this attempt to explain my views and wishes. The kindness I have always received from you, and my wish to conceal nothing from you, has

emboldened me to do so, and has, I fear, made me too presumptuous and forward. But hoping you will look this over, and believe that I am most anxious to be guided by your advice, and to take no step that has not your sanction and approval.

G.

"To qualify us for that pre-eminence, we had then our high mind and a constancy unconquerable; we were then inspired with no Party passions, but such as were durable as well as warm, such as corresponded to the great interests we had at stake. This force of character was inspired, as all such spirit must ever be, from above. Government gave the impulse. As well may we fancy that of itself the sea will swell, and without words the billows will insult the adverse shores, as that the great mass of the people will be moved and elevated and constrained by a steady and permanent direction, to bear upon one point, without the influence of superior authority or superior mind."

III.

LETTERS FROM THE CRIMEA, BY AUGUSTUS STAFFORD.

FLAG SHIP, KAVATA BAY,
Dec. 3, 1854.

MY DEAR JOHN,—This little bay is about three miles south of Sebastopol—very bad anchorage, but the best to be found here except Balaclava, from the which I have arrived this morning. I have been in the hospital ashore and afloat there, and have received

a very kind note of thanks from Lord Raglan and one from Lord Stratford. I plan soon to go back to Constantinople, and remain hospitalising there till about three weeks before the meeting of Parliament, being obliged to allow that time for my journey home this winter weather. So much about the least important thing in this letter—viz., its writer. The mortality, from disease, in our camp is rather more than eighty every four-and-twenty hours. Cholera is in our hospital, though not to any great extent, but rages fearfully among our newly arrived regiments. Our cavalry may be considered as extinct for the present, it being acknowledged that there are not twenty horses in the whole camp strong enough to charge. The Dragoons, &c., in vain solicit permission to shoot their faithful favourites. They are ordered to ride or drive or drag them till they drop. A few convulsions in the mud close the existence of the "charger," and then some one comes up and skins him for a hut roof. I have been all over our Camp, and marvel not that some die but that any live, horses or men—soldiers or officers. The latter, indeed, are getting home on leave as fast as they can, some say faster than they ought. I pronounce no opinion on a subject of so much delicacy, but such departures do not much inspirit our troops. I believe it is known at headquarters here 60,000 Russians and 200 guns are coming to the aid of Menchikoff. We are less a besieging than a besieged force at present. The men during the last week have had only half or quarter rations served out to them, and they are so utterly exhausted that they sleep in the trenches, and my conviction is that the Russians will soon make an onslaught on Balaclava, in the ships of which tiny land-locked bay lie the whole of our supplies; in short, it is our Sebastopol. The anchorage all along this coast is so bad that the French have sent away ten ships (men-

of-war). Admiral Dundas has been obliged to hoist his flag on board this small steamer, and the *Britannia* has gone to the Bosphorus, where all the sailing vessels ought to go.

If the late gale, or rather hurricane, had lasted four hours longer, the whole fleet must have dashed to pieces on the shore. I do not see how we can count on the arrival of our transports during the winter across this ungovernable sea.

The army draws upon the navy supplies almost *ad libitum*, and if Graham had been no better administrator than Newcastle, starvation would have simplified this complex business altogether.

Prince Napoleon said here: "If defeat comes, it will involve with *you* a change of ministers; with *us*, of dynasties." Week after week we hear of a general assault, but week after week with less faith and less hope. The army is not only in great part sick, but in every part debilitated. Lord Raglan writes despatches and quantities of letters, but he does not show himself in the camp, and is considered an amiable, gentlemanly, complete failure.

Cathcart is regretted, and Sir Colin is praised—"the rest silence." Every responsible person and department and every sub-division thereof expects an increasing failure and a tremendous row when Parliament meets. My Admiral here says the more matters are investigated, the better he shall be pleased and cleared. I believe him, and I think Sir E. L. will be found to share the usual fate of those who deal *privately and confidentially* with Newcastle. Send this letter to Disraeli; he will deal with it confidentially, and may fairly do so.

(Sgd.) AUG. STAFFORD.

HIGH QUARTERS, CRIMEA,
Oct. 17, 1855.

MY DEAR JOHN,—The newspapers tell so much that every one must write from this place at the risk of repetition, which risk I am about to run with you.

Vexation and shame at our Redan failure are the strongest feelings here now, and every one has an explanation for that which no one can deny. General S. ought to have known that the regiments he selected were composed only of boys, and no more the same except in name and uniform with last year than with the first day of their formation. The distance ought not to have been so great between our works and the Russians, and the reserves ought to have been under better generalship. Above all, we ought not to have let our regiments perish miserably and wholly as they did last winter.

There is nothing but detraction, crimination, and recrimination here. The officers abuse the Press, and yet 'The Times' holds no stronger language of them than they do to each other. The soldiers must hear them, and do hear them, though the officers vote them too stupid to understand, so that we have very nearly out here that hopeless mass, an army of critics. We are sunk to the level of a contingent to the French Army, where the talent of organisation exists to a degree absolutely provoking, but from whom we seem determined to learn nothing. Lord Panmure jobs after a fashion worthy of the last century. The Sardinians, whom every one praises, receive their pay from us and their orders from the French. Osman Pasha found the Crimea intolerable, and has angered his allies by leaving it. The English expect the army will be hutted this winter and its horses stabled; but as soon as ever the Army Works Corps came out it fell to building villas for its own chiefs far beyond the huts of our generals, and as those villas

are not finished, we begin to despair of our huts, though they are arrived and lie at Balaclava. I was so exasperated at this that I have written to the Horse Guards asking them to telegraph to Mr Doyne, using my name as their informant, for the A.W.C. is a child of Lord Panmure's, and no one dare criticise it. The health of our army is better than its average health in England, and the hospitals are admirable—the French doctors own that competition with them is impossible.

The Duke of Newcastle stayed a long time hereabouts. Every one found him agreeable (except old Simpson, who did not like him at all), but every one was surprised at the total want of cleverness he displayed.

General Windham has done the best individual feat which we have heard of in our army, but the whole military intellect of the siege has been confined to the Russians. As I rode through their wonderful defences of Sebastopol, I thought within myself how utterly we have mistaken this people. I am going to dine with Henry Wortley to-day. He is in great form, with strong views of his own and great dissatisfaction at the idea of an idle winter here. He is full of admiration at the Russian resources and the Russian skill, and I think he has reason. But if we were called upon to do battle again I have no doubt all grumbling would be silenced, and the Redan stain wiped out. Of the 1900 men who advanced, 700 received wounds in the neck or heart from Russians behind embrasures or parapets. When shall we be able to force into the official skull the preciousness of a trained soldier?

(Sgd.) AUG. STAFFORD.

IV.

LETTER FROM COLONEL LINDSAY ON BEHALF OF THE QUEEN, AND MY ANSWER, FROM LORD JOHN MANNERS' 'POLITICAL JOURNAL.'

BALMORAL CASTLE,
June 15, 1884.

MY DEAR LORD JOHN,—I write to you to convey a wish of the Queen, and that is that you will tell me for her private information what is your opinion as to the state of the political horizon at the present moment, what is likely to happen, and what is in contemplation, as far as the Conservative Party is concerned, what would be the probable tone and temper of the country in the event of a dissolution, what the probable result, and when it is likely to take place, and what is most likely to hasten it, and so on. The Queen wishes for knowledge, which she hopes to obtain from you through me. The fact is she feels so cut off, as it were, from confidential information on these matters, now that those upon whom she formerly relied are passed and gone, and she feels that you could give her your opinion as an old and experienced Conservative statesman.

You see she wants an insight into forthcoming events, which would relieve all anxiety which she naturally feels, and she would like to know your opinion upon the situation, and be put in possession of what she cannot obtain except through an old friend like yourself. If you will send me, therefore, a letter which I can read to the Queen (but addressed *to me*, as if I had asked you from *myself*) she would be so much obliged.

In short, she wants a little forewarning, so as to be fortified to a certain extent when the crisis arrives.

Your communication will, of course, be received by the Queen in the *strictest confidence.* I hope I have explained myself.

If you will send me your plain and unrestricted view of the condition of things as soon as possible, I shall be obliged, so that the Queen may have the opportunity and advantage of knowing what you think before the end of this week. You might add anything more that you think the Queen would be glad to know in reference to the future of the Conservative Party.—I am, in the strictest confidence, sincerely yours,

C. H. Lindsay.

LETTER from Lord John Manners to Colonel Lindsay.

3 Cambridge Gate,
June 17, 1884.

My dear Colonel Lindsay,—You ask me to give you a forecast of coming political events and my opinion of the probable result of an early appeal to the country.

I will do my best to comply with your request, but ignorant as I am of the exact nature of the communication to be made to Parliament on Monday next on the subject of Egypt, my answer must be to a great extent hypothetical.

First, then, on the assumption that the statement to be made on Monday is satisfactory, if not to the Conservative Party, at any rate to the large majority of the House of Commons: in that case, satisfied with

their majority, the Government would, I presume, press forward their measures, and the House of Lords would towards the middle of July have to deal with the Second Reading of the Franchise Bill. If the peers act in accordance with the all but unanimous wish of their friends in the Lower House, they will decline to read the Bill a second time, on account of its being unaccompanied by a Scheme of Redistribution. Should the Bill be thus thrown out, the next move would, of course, be with the Government, and it would be useless for me to speculate on the course they may decide to take under these circumstances.

In the event, however, of Mr Gladstone's asking and obtaining the Queen's permission to dissolve, you may like to hear what I anticipate would be the probable result of a dissolution on such an issue. The object of the Radicals would no doubt be to make the elections turn on the cry of "Reform and down with the House of Lords." Now I should not fear that cry at all if it was met courageously, as I hope it would be met.

The existing constituencies have shown no inclination towards a revolutionary policy, and the honest discharge of its duty by our Estate of the Realm would not, in my opinion, render it unpopular with them. I think, therefore, that the general and genuine opinion of the country would be obtained through a Dissolution under such conditions, and that the bye-elections during the last two or three years may be taken as a fair index of the leaning of the public mind. Leaving Ireland out of the calculation, the bye-elections have resulted in a Conservative gain of twelve seats in England and Scotland. There are two important county seats now vacant—South Wales and Mid-Surrey,—and as both are contested, they will throw a considerable light on the political bias of that class of constituencies.

So far, I have written on the assumption that the Government emerge triumphantly out of the Anglo-French-Egyptian embroglio. Let me now say a word or two on the opposite assumption. Should the House of Commons refuse to sanction the new proposals, I apprehend an immediate dissolution must take place, whether the Government remains in office or resigns. In that case the feeling of the country would be, undoubtedly, favourable to the Conservative Party, and, apart again from Ireland, we might reasonably expect a majority in the new Parliament. But even under the present franchise, Ireland will prove a very great difficulty in the way of a Conservative Government. It is not, I think, too much to say that under the proposed franchise, with such a scheme of Redistribution as Mr Gladstone shadowed forth, neither a Conservative nor any Constitutional Government would be possible except by sufferance of Mr Parnell and his successors. Hitherto I have never taken a gloomy view of national politics, but I confess I do so now. If the House of Lords quail and fail now, I see no point of future resistance. In my opinion, they ought to have made their stand against the Irish Arrears Act. If they yield now, the future constitution of the country will be the Sovereign and a democratic House of Commons, swayed by some one clever orator, who in his turn will be swayed by eighty or ninety Irish irreconcilables. It is impossible to contemplate without apprehension and deep sympathy the position of the Sovereign under such a polity. Under it none of the safeguards which exist in the United States would be found, and the Sovereign would be left face to face with the chance product of something approaching to manhood franchise.

To my mind, the only prospect of safety lies in the exercise of that not common quality—courage; and we have a remarkable and encouraging proof of

what that can effect in the history of what happened exactly one hundred years ago.

The House of Lords had then the courage to throw out the India Bill under circumstances curiously analogous to those of the present moment, and were sustained in their action by the constituencies when appealed to.

To sum up: should Mr Gladstone's statement on Monday be satisfactory to his party, I apprehend that a political crisis will be produced by the rejection of the Franchise Bill by the House of Lords next month. Should it lead to a ministerial defeat, a Dissolution would be imminent, the result of which might be fairly expected to be favourable to the Conservative Party. I fear I have omitted some points on which you would like information, and have included others I might properly have omitted.

Any further questions you would like to ask I will gladly do my best to answer. Under Sir W. Jenner's advice I had arranged to go to Homburg at the end of this week, but the critical state of affairs has induced me to postpone my journey for the present.—Believe me to be, Yours very sincerely,

JOHN MANNERS.

COLONEL LINDSAY'S REPLY.

June 19, 1884.

DEAR LORD JOHN,—Many thanks for your elaborate and intelligible reply. It was read by H.M. with great interest, who quite comprehends *now* the condition of affairs, which though an anxious one is nevertheless hopeful, which is as much as to say: There is life in the old hound yet. Such a document

will be a great comfort to ——, and no wonder. You answered to the helm beautifully.—Believe me, sincerely yours,

C. H. Lindsay.

V.

THE MAKING OF THE CABINET IN 1885.

June 14, 1885.

I resume these jottings under very remarkable circumstances. On the 8th an Amendment to the second reading of the Budget Bill — drawn partly by Hicks Beach, partly by myself—was carried by a majority of 12; and on the 9th Mr Gladstone and his colleagues resigned. That afternoon Northcote and four or five of our front bench had a hasty consultation in his room at the House, and came to the conclusion that we could not shrink from the task of forming a Government, if called upon by the Queen.

On Thursday, 11th, Salisbury lunched with us, and had a long and confidential conversation with me. In the event of the Queen's asking him to form a Government, he said he should stipulate that he should be Foreign Secretary as well as Prime Minister, proposing that Northcote should be First Lord and lead the Commons; Cross to be Chancellor of the Exchequer; Gibson, Home Secretary; R. Churchill, Indian; Beach, Colonial Secretary; Carnarvon, Lord-Lieutenant. He then, after discussing minor men and appointments, asked us to consider whether in dealing with the Irish problem that country could be divided for local and private bill purposes into

four Provinces, with a central Court of Appeal. He had up to then had no communication from the Queen, but that evening he was summoned to Balmoral.

The next day I walked with Northcote across the Parks from the House to his daughter-in-law's, and discussed the position freely with him. He appeared content with, or rather resigned to Salisbury's supremacy, but suggested, what had escaped me with respect to the cardinal feature of the proposed arrangement, that the rules laid down by the Queen in the Palmerston-Russell dispute, that the Foreign Secretary should submit all important despatches to the Prime Minister, would be nullified by it, and that if he, as leader of the House of Commons, was to be answerable for the Foreign Policy in that House, the despatches must be submitted to him. He also dissented from the idea of making Cross Chancellor of the Exchequer, preferring Stanley for that post.

On Monday, the 15th, I was summoned to Arlington Street, where assembled nearly all our old colleagues except Stanley (in Lancashire), but not Randolph Churchill. Salisbury put to each in turn the question, accept or refuse office. We all said accept except Beach, who, to my astonishment, gave a variety of reasons for refusing, and suggested that Salisbury had not sufficiently urged on the Queen the necessity of forcing Gladstone to reconsider his resignation. Salisbury produced a telegram which the Queen had sent, at his instance, to Gladstone with that object, and Gladstone's telegram in reply. The latter asserted that Salisbury had announced readiness to accept, and insinuated that the Queen was bound to retain his services. Though we felt that Gladstone had misstated the case, we all, except Beach, admitted that he could not be forced back, and Salisbury ended discussion by declaring that in honour he could not

abandon the Queen, and that if he had to do so owing to the desertion of his colleagues, he should abandon public life. The explanation of R. Churchill's absence was that he declined to take office with several of our former colleagues, and insisted on a reconstruction after his own ideas. This was felt to be preposterous.

Shortly afterwards in the House the Fourth Party broke loose, and denounced as unconstitutional the conduct of the House of Lords in inserting Registration acceleration clauses in the Redistribution Bill. The Government and Northcote having explained that this had been done on Salisbury's suggestion, Beach supported Wolff and Churchill, and divided with them for the adjournment. Gibson then informed me that Churchill was absolutely impracticable, and was determined to prevent the formation of any Government except one of his own. He urged me to see Salisbury at once, and advise him to send for Churchill and Beach early in the morning, and to make them come to a definite conclusion. This I did, and on returning to the House at 8 o'clock found Northcote nearly alone on the bench. He confided to me that very possibly it was the last time he should occupy it, as he was asked to take a Peerage, with an Office, in order that Beach might lead the Commons. On the 16th it appeared that my visit to Arlington Street had succeeded, for on calling there this morning, at Salisbury's request, he told us Randolph had accepted the India Office, with no other stipulation than that Gorst should be Judge-Advocate. He requested me to see Northcote, and to break to him his wish that the Peerage arrangement should be made with the Colonies as his Office. This unpleasant task I performed as well as I could, and nothing could be more admirable than Northcote's reception of my message. Having informed Salisbury of my success, I heard

no more of Cabinet making that day; but on going to Arlington Street on Wednesday, 17th June, when the full Cabinet (except Giffard, Lord Chancellor) were assembled, I soon learned fresh troubles were in store for us. After we had all agreed that Salisbury should inform the Queen of our acceptance conditionally on Gladstone promising to help us by obtaining priority for Supply and Ways and Means, our business being at an end, I patted Beach on the shoulder, and expressed my satisfaction at his leadership. To my amazement he said nothing was settled, that Northcote was dissatisfied, that he, Beach, thought he ought not to be First Lord, and that he was willing to take any other small office or even none at all. As we were breaking up, Northcote asked me to read some letters he wished to show me, which I read in the library. The first was from him to Salisbury expressing his disinclination to accept the Colonies or any office except that of First Lord; the second, from Salisbury, reminded him that the first suggestion of a peerage came from himself, and that he earnestly desired to do nothing which should hurt his feelings, &c.; the third was a long reply from Northcote, insisting that he would appear to be sacrificed to R. Churchill and H. Beach, and that after their conduct and vote on Monday night he could not consent to occupy a post inferior to theirs: that he did not object to be second in the Government, but that the slight proposed to be put upon him was too great to be borne, and that he would rather take a peerage and retire from official life. I pointed out to him that the arrangement to which he objected had no reference to R. Churchill, and that we all would regard his defection as wellnigh fatal. He seemed quite broken down and miserable. When he left I scribbled a line to Salisbury, and suggested the interference of the Queen, for I perceived in what

Northcote said a certain feeling that she had not behaved kindly or confidentially towards him. Salisbury saw me at once, and we discussed the dilemma. If Northcote is now made First Lord, there is no great place for Beach without dispossessing some important man. I urged him to press the Queen to see Northcote, and subsequently charged Henry to tell Salisbury that if the Postmaster's place could ease his difficulties to regard it at his disposal.

My suggestion was adopted: on the 19th the Queen wrote a charming letter to Northcote offering him an Earldom, and Salisbury proposed to him to take the First Lordship of the Treasury, with which offers Northcote was, as he told me, more than content; so that when we met on the 18th we were united and cheerful. A fresh difficulty then appeared in the shape of Gladstone's answer to our demand, which he declined to comply with. We decided unanimously that we could not go on with Gladstone's vague assurances, and agreed that Salisbury should at once inform the Queen of Giffard's and Gibson's opinion that if the Redistribution Bill passed into law, she would be deprived of the power of dissolution.

Yesterday, the 19th, further communications of an unsatisfactory character passed between the two Prime Ministers; but in Gladstone's was a statement that he thought he could convince Salisbury of the reasonableness of his view. This appeared to mean business, and this view was subsequently strengthened by a remark to Northcote at the House by Gladstone to the effect that he thought that a personal interview between himself and Salisbury would bring about a satisfactory result. Gladstone spoke in the House with good temper and fairness.

At Salisbury's interview with the Queen in discussing the division of business between the Prime Minister and the First Lord, she asked with whom

would rest the advice as to ecclesiastical appointments. Salisbury replied he presumed with the Prime Minister. The Queen hinted that she was not likely to be pleased with his nominations, upon which he said, "Oh, then, ma'am, give them to Northcote," but, rejoined the Queen, "I probably shan't be better pleased with his."

Sat., June 20.

Understanding from Henry that we should not be wanted this afternoon, I went with Janetta to the concert by the Blind at the new Battersea Park Palace. Coming away we were met by a servant with a summons to Arlington Street. Driving straight thither, I arrived as the Council was breaking up. It had been held to consider Gladstone's reply, which was vague, but, as I thought, not unsatisfactory. Salisbury went down to Hatfield afterwards, and on entering Willis' Rooms for Hogg's usual Metropolitan Board dinner a couple of hours later, I was saluted by the news that all was over, and the late Government back again in office. I made a debonair speech in returning thanks for the House of Commons, in order to mark my disbelief in such rumours, and on going to Lady Borthwick's party afterwards (when the same story was told and credited), adopted the same line. The situation, however, is becoming ludicrous.

June 22nd.

Last night the opposite note[1] was brought into me in bed. On going this morning to Arlington Street, I found Beach with Lord Salisbury. Presently Richmond and Cranbrook joined us. The object of

[1] This was "the opposite note": "My dear John Manners, If you happen to be able to look in on me between 12 and 2, Monday, I should like to show you a letter. It is not a regular meeting, but concerns our business of yesterday.—Ever yours truly, Salisbury."

the meeting was to read and discuss a letter from the Queen in answer to Salisbury's communication of Saturday. In it H.M. begged us not to desert her, pointed out that Gladstone's language was susceptible of a more favourable interpretation, and offered to express in a letter to be made public that she attached that meaning to his letter.

Upon this, I asked if any answer had been received from Gladstone to our last communication. Upon which Salisbury pulled it out of his pocket and read it. Virtually it quite justified the Queen's view, and Beach, who had hitherto declared himself opposed to proceeding further, in spite of the Queen's letter, yielded and admitted that if Gladstone permitted the purport of it to be made public, we might undertake the task. Sir H. Ponsonby, who called at that moment, went off to ask Gladstone, and returned with his permission to treat his letter as part of the correspondence. In it was a remarkable statement as to the *mala fides* of Russia in the Afghan business. The Rubicon is therefore passed, and we are virtually in office.

June 25.

On the 23rd all the new Cabinet assembled in Arlington Street for the purpose of formally ratifying the decision of the previous day, and yesterday we went down to Windsor to kiss hands. It was a hot midsummer's day, and the view over the terrace garden, with the Park beyond, where hay-making was in progress, through the open windows was exquisite and refreshing. After we had all been sworn, we kissed hands singly. I shall never forget the Queen's face as she met me and came forward to receive my homage: it was radiant with pleasure and full of sympathy. The Prince of Wales was the only witness.

VI.

THE DUKE OF RUTLAND'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO 'BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.'

Art and Artists in Spain	Jan. 1849
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The Political Situation	March 1881
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From St Stephens to the Guildhall	Dec. 1883
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